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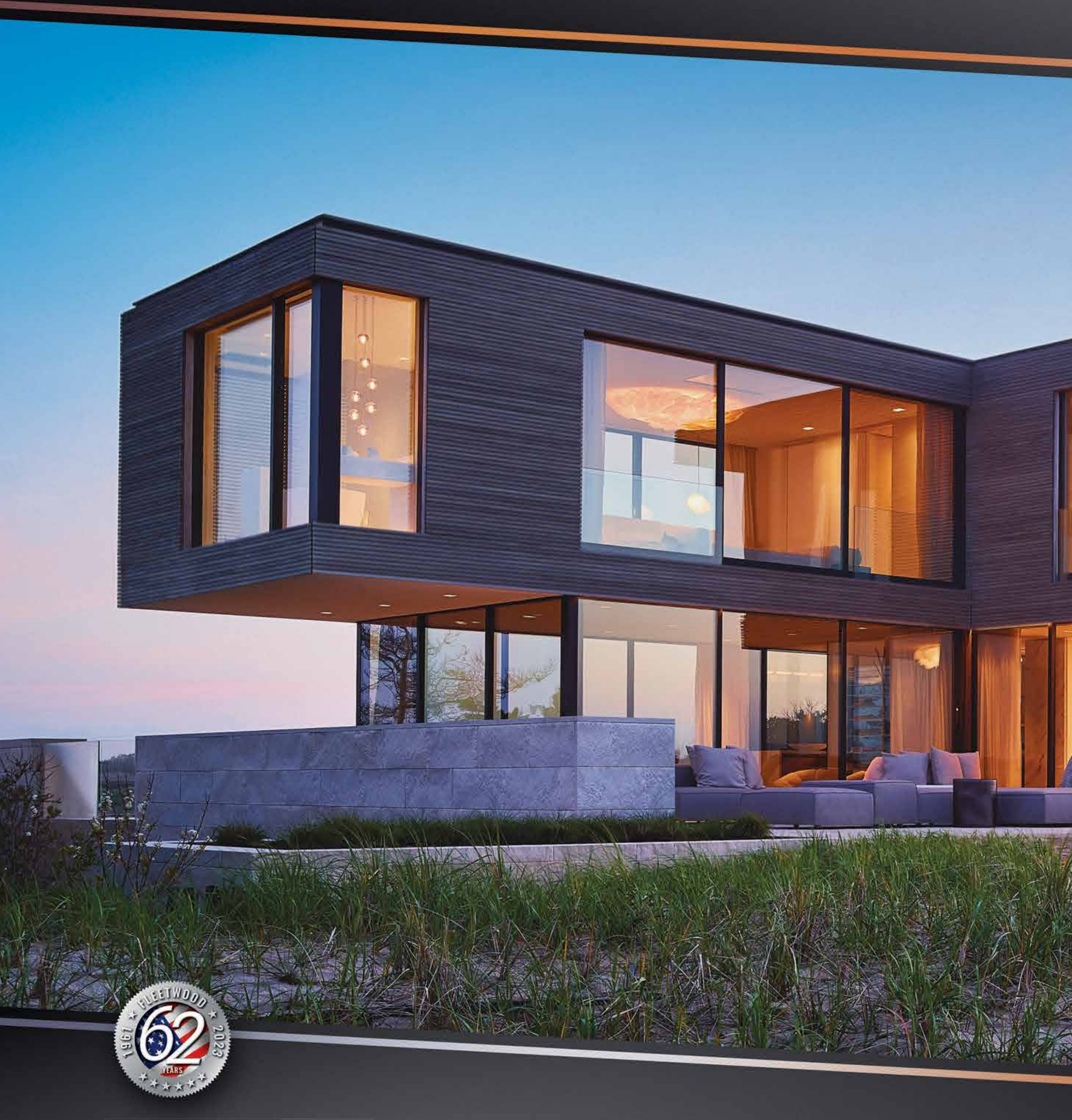

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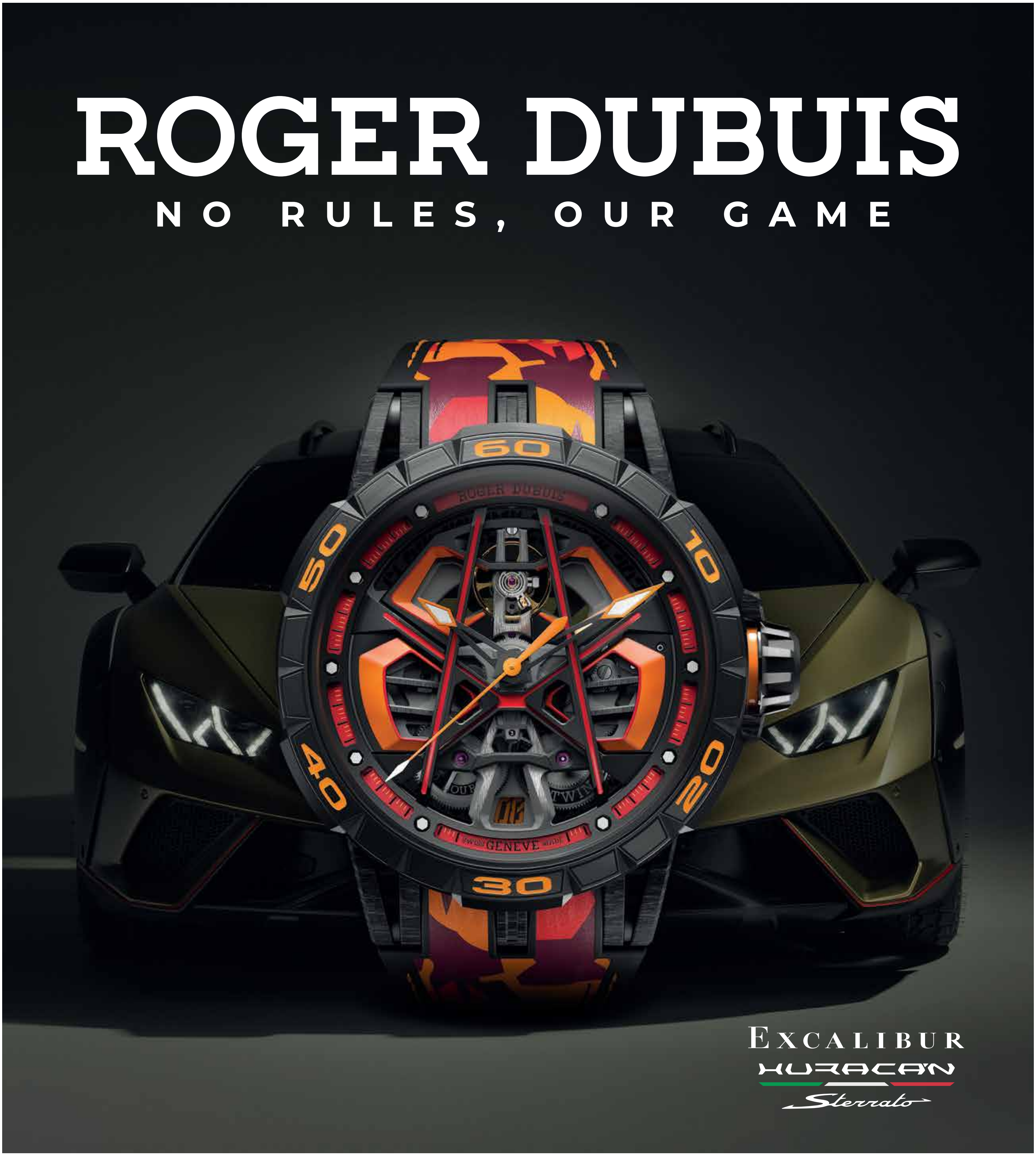
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Robb Report

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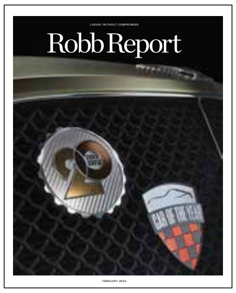

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Basem Wasef

Wasef is a journalist specializing in high-end cars, motorcycles, watches and aircraft. After being tasked with covering airship trends (p. 82), the Egypt-born aviation enthusiast revealed he was surprised to learn how quickly the lighter-than-air transport market had pivoted during the pandemic. "The buzz was previously focused on luxury travel," he explains, "but supply-chain issues and environmental concerns quickly shifted the conversation from leisure to utility."

Janelle Jones

Jones is an editorial and commercial photographer based in Brooklyn. Drawing on her fine-art background, she has put her own playful spin on still-life images for publications including *The New Yorker, Esquire, Bon Appétit* and *Robb Report*. "I approach my work with a sense of humor and a love of color," she says. Her keen eye for composition and detail came in handy when shooting this month's Styling Notes (p. 34), which showcases looks that can be worn all day and night.

Tom Parker

Best known for capturing epic landscapes, Parker discovered his calling as a photographer while living abroad. He has visited nearly 90 countries, taking his audience on a visual journey to some of the world's most intriguing destinations. For this issue, he brought his lens to the south of England to document its sparkling-wine boom ("Bubbling Up," p. 144). "You could tell there is a real pedigree amongst the growers and producers with a hunger to compete with Champagne, particularly given the changing climate here," he says. Parker is a contributing photographer for *Condé Nast Traveler* and *Racquet*.

Jen Murphy

A writer and editor bouncing between Boulder, Colo., and Maui, Murphy has written for *The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg* and *Condé Nast Traveler*, among others. In "Into the West" (p. 152), she journeyed west to Wyoming's 3 Spear Ranch, where she encountered one of her most interesting discoveries while visiting the property. "I never knew the story of the tie-hack men," she recalls. "As soon as I saw the remnants of their log flumes, I could see how they inspired Disney to create the Splash Mountain ride."

Viju Mathew

Prior to becoming *Robb Report*'s automotive editor, Mathew spent over a decade covering all sectors of the luxury market. Now he can be found test-driving luxury vehicles around the world and spearheading the magazine's Dream Machines section. In this issue, he co-authored the annual Car of the Year feature (p. 106) as the automobile competition marks its 20th anniversary. "A personal highlight was to see that we could offer such a diverse field of power-train configurations at a time when the automotive industry has left the crossroad and committed to electrification," he says.

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Editor's Letter

What were you doing 20 years ago? If it feels like an eternity has passed . . . well, it has. I was features editor at a style magazine in London, with a side hustle as a presenter on MTV. Senior editor Justin Fenner's family had recently moved to South Carolina, where he enrolled in a high-school journalism course.

Marine and aviation editor Michael Verdon began freelancing for *Robb Report* that year, while staff writers Abigail Montanez and Tori Latham were 10 and 8, respectively (doesn't that make me feel old?), and were into soccer and the violin.

Elsewhere in 2003, the US and UK invaded Iraq. Arnold Schwarzenegger was elected governor of California. The sequencing of about 99 percent of the human genome was completed. And then, if you hadn't already made the connection from this month's cover, among those moments of considerable consequence, *Robb Report* launched an automobile competition, invited some friends to help pick the winner and named it Car of the Year.

Fast-forward two decades and the latest event, held in Napa Valley and Boca Raton at the end of 2022, was a classic, full of seduction and surprise—as COTY so often and memorably has been. (I'm still talking about the cars here, OK?) A total of 176 reader-judges tested 10 superlative vehicles and graded them across a list of criteria, including design, performance and luxury. Last year's champ, Bentley, was attempting a repeat with its GT Continental Speed, while a strong showing was expected from Aston Martin's ferocious DBX707, hoping to follow in the footsteps of COTY's only other SUV victor, Lamborghini's Urus in 2019.

But there's always an unanticipated challenger, a curious beast that unexpectedly beguiles. This year, would that be the Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye Widebody Jailbreak (even if just for the name)? Or the remarkable Lucid Air GT Performance, which has more power than any other car in the history of COTY—bar one: the Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Grand Sport, which wowed judges but still didn't win, in 2013. Like I said, seduction and surprise. This year's coverage is the most expansive yet: Check out our 38-page package starting on p. 106.

Over the years I've observed that, among our readership, connoisseurship in one area—cars, for example—only increases the likelihood of expertise and enthusiasm in others. So I expect many of you will be drawn to our story about English sparkling wine's emergence as an asset—not necessarily to collectors yet, though there are certainly some good bets out there, but to Champagne houses and other investors. They are busily buying up the chalk-streaked soil on which these vineyards stand—or *could* stand.

While English bubbles still make up only a fraction of the global total of sparkling wine (for context, English fizz accounts for just 3 percent of the UK market, with five bottles of Champagne sold for every one of English), their quality is such that they should be on your radar, if they're not already. On page 144, regular contributor Ben Oliver explores the celebrated vineyards near his home on England's South Coast and makes some surprising discoveries of his own.

Plus we get inside NFL quarterback Aaron Rogers's head on page 50, explore midtown Manhattan as an unlikely culinary hot spot, ponder the role of airships in our aviation future (will they have replaced Ubers when COTY hits 30?) and take a ride of the four-legged kind while on a glorious new equestrian adventure in Wyoming.

If this is what 2023 looks like, we're all for it.

Enjoy the issue.

Paul Croughton

EDITOR IN CHIEF

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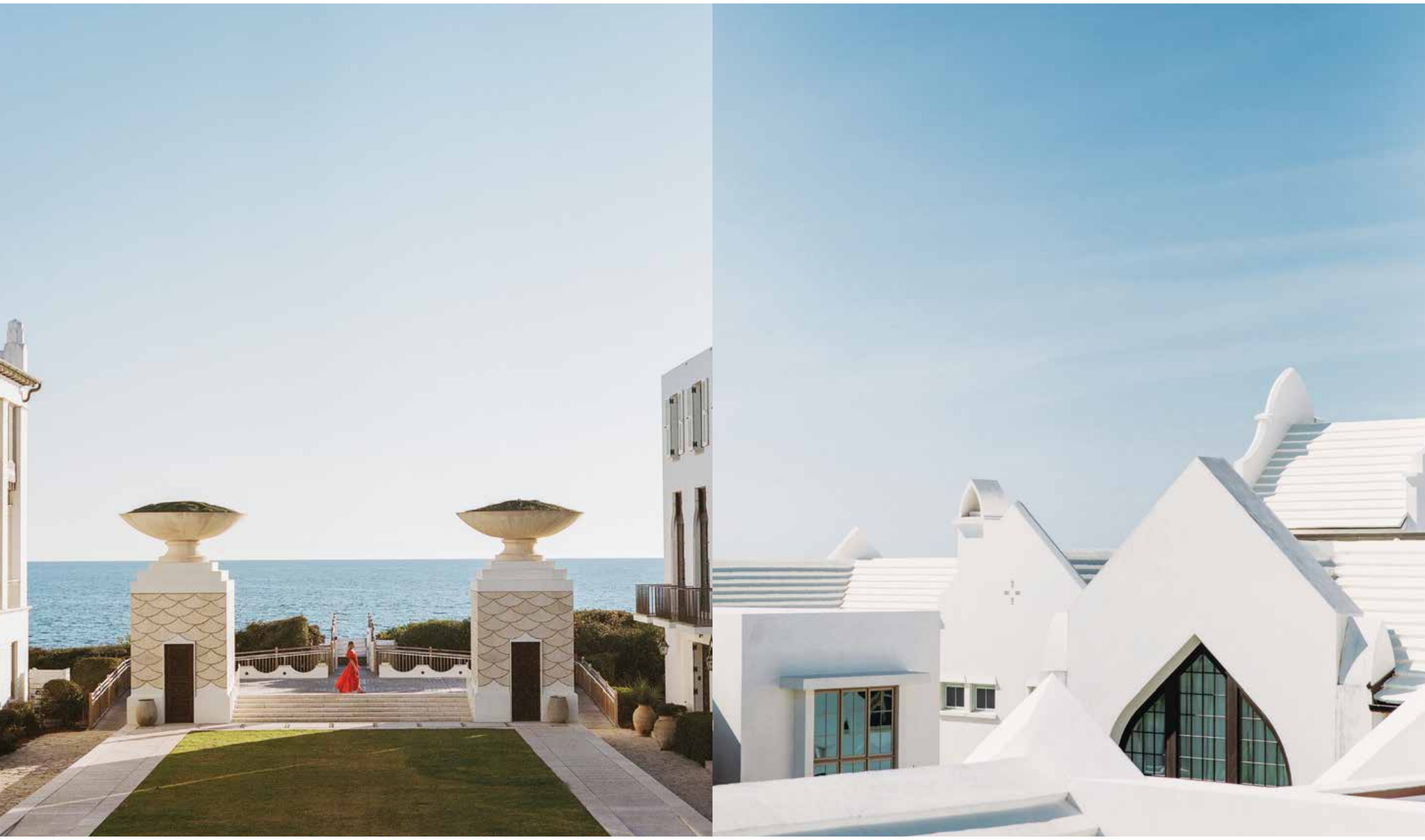

Nestled upon Northwest Florida's white sands and sparkling, emerald waters sits a New Urbanist community where every detail makes luxury seem simple. Alys Beach offers legacy homeownership opportunities in a town designed for connection. With fine dining, highly curated shops, and picturesque pocket parks, the Alys Beach community is rich with serenity and sophistication.

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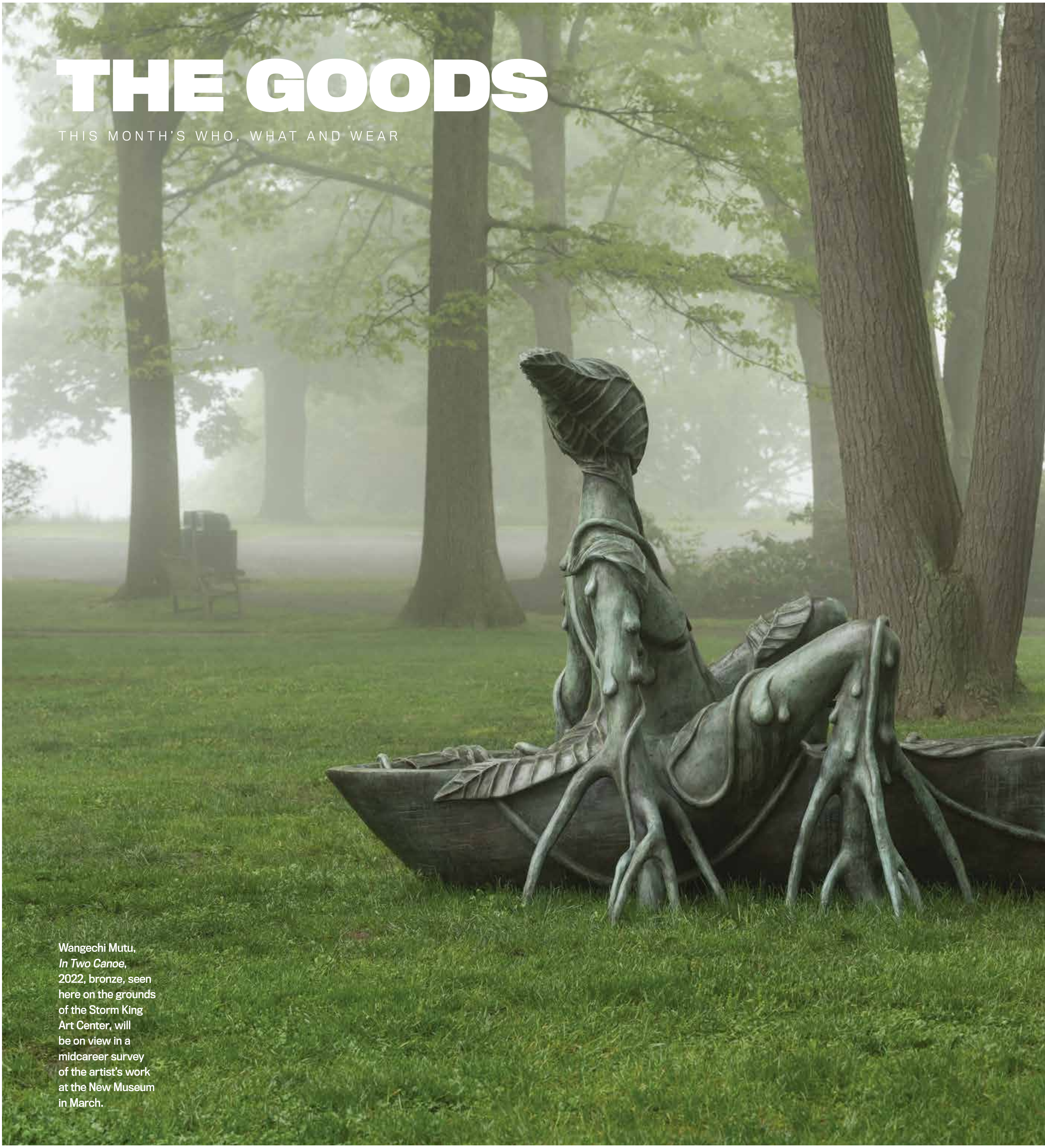
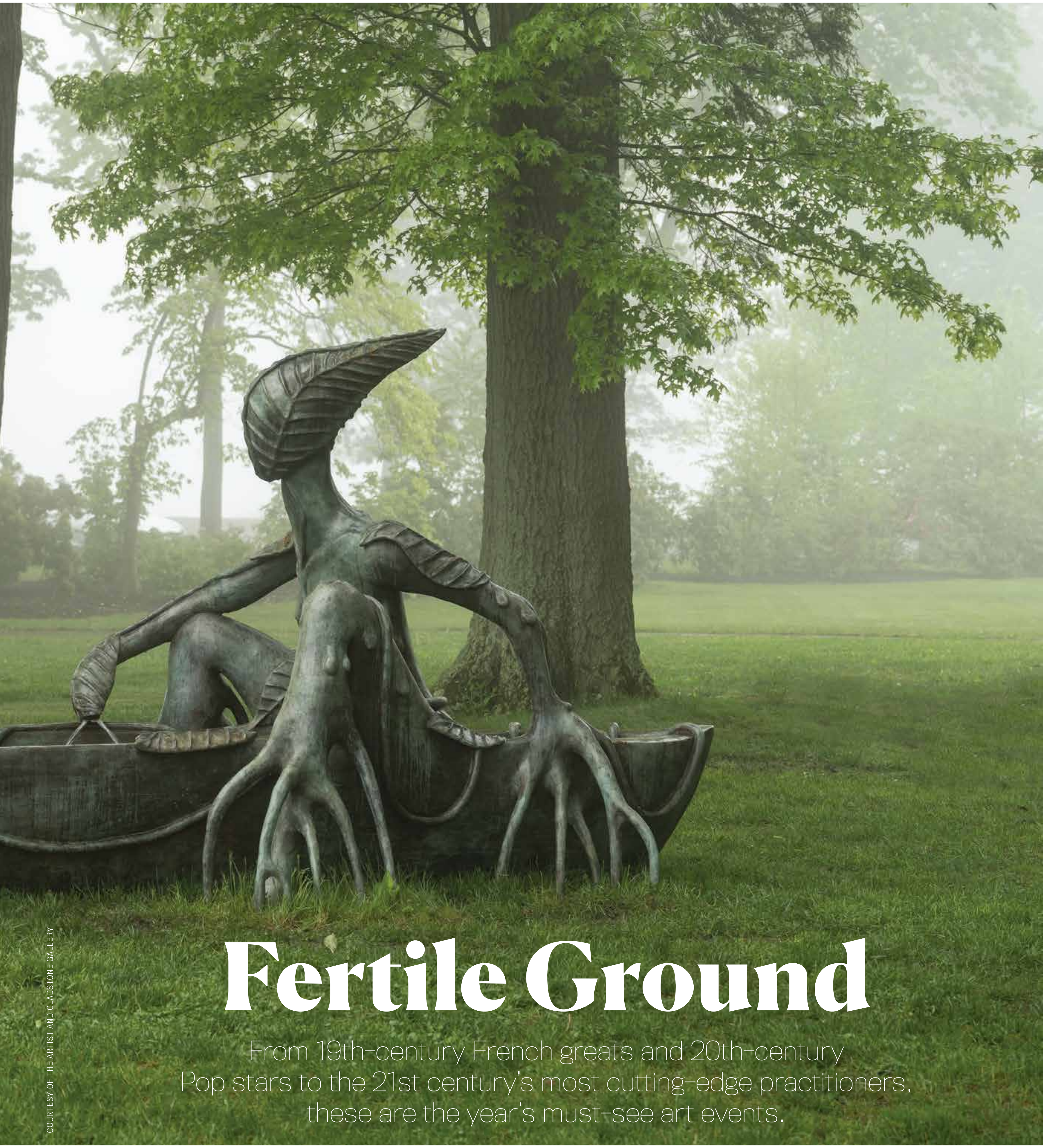


THE GOODS

THIS MONTH'S WHO, WHAT AND WEAR

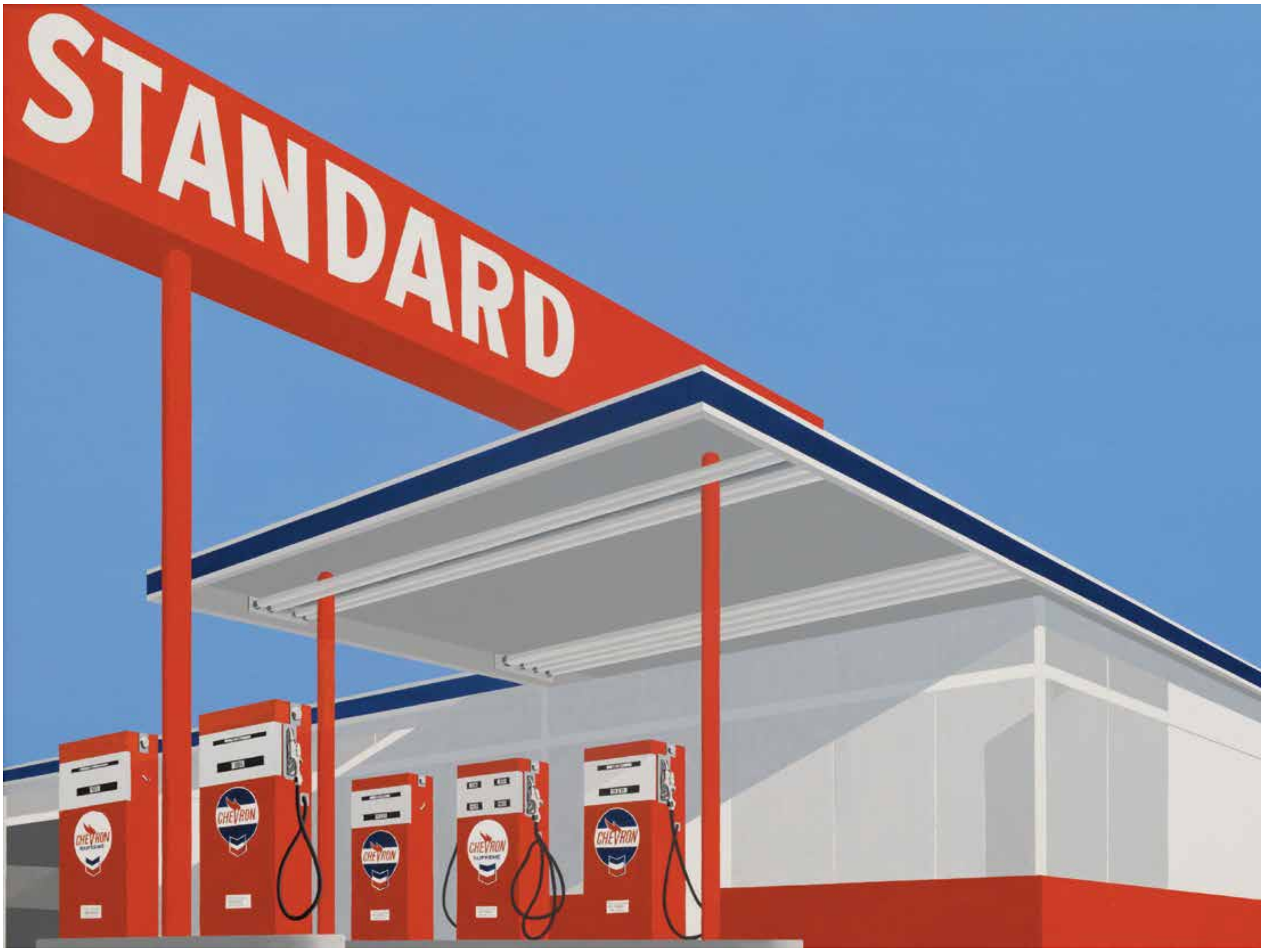
Wangechi Mutu, *In Two Canoe*, 2022, bronze, seen here on the grounds of the Storm King Art Center, will be on view in a midcareer survey of the artist's work at the New Museum in March.



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND GLADSTONE GALLERY

Fertile Ground

From 19th-century French greats and 20th-century Pop stars to the 21st century's most cutting-edge practitioners, these are the year's must-see art events.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: **Ed Ruscha, *Standard Station, Ten-Cent Western Being Torn in Half*, 1964, oil on canvas; Sam Francis, Gemini G.E.L., LLC, *Meteorite*, 1986, screenprint; Marisol, *Mi Mama Y Yo*, 1968, painted bronze and aluminum pole.**

T

The art calendar is always chockablock with can't-miss museum exhibitions, biennales and international fairs, not to mention countless gallery shows that open each month. But 2023 promises to be especially teeming, as it's likely to be the first full year without Covid restrictions in most art capitals since 2019. While the fairs and biennales are probably already on your calendar, *Robb Report* has culled the major events to put in your diary now.

Dia Art Foundation is known for collecting artists in depth and supporting their wildest imaginings—*City,* Michael Heizer's sprawling epic in the Nevada desert, and Walter De Maria's *The Lightning Field* in New Mexico come to mind. This month, Dia Beacon, the institution's massive space in a former Nabisco factory in upstate New York, will mount a long-term exhibition devoted to **Senga Nengudi,** who has used humble materials such as vinyl, water, lint and tape to blur the boundaries of sculpture, photography, painting and performance over her five-decade-long practice. It's set to be a big year for Nengudi: At a Dallas gala on April 1, she will also receive the prestigious **Nasher Sculpture Prize,** which comes with a $100,000 cash award.

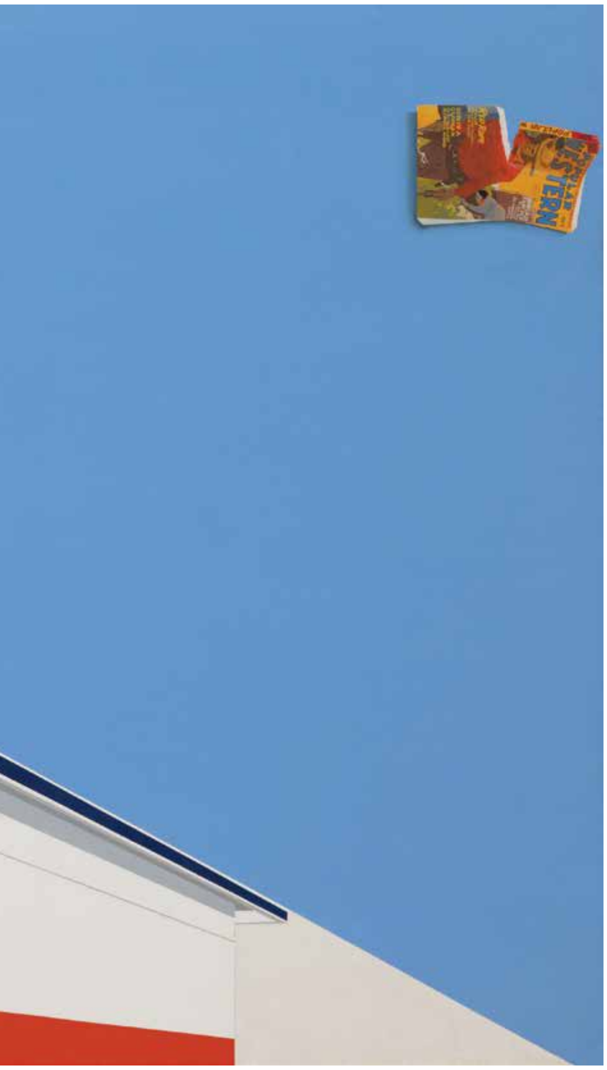
Nengudi's influences range from the African diaspora to Japan. Abstract expressionist **Sam Francis** was also wowed by the island nation, which he first visited in 1957, and his art's relationship with Japan and Eastern philosophy form the basis of an exhibition opening at the **Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)** in April.

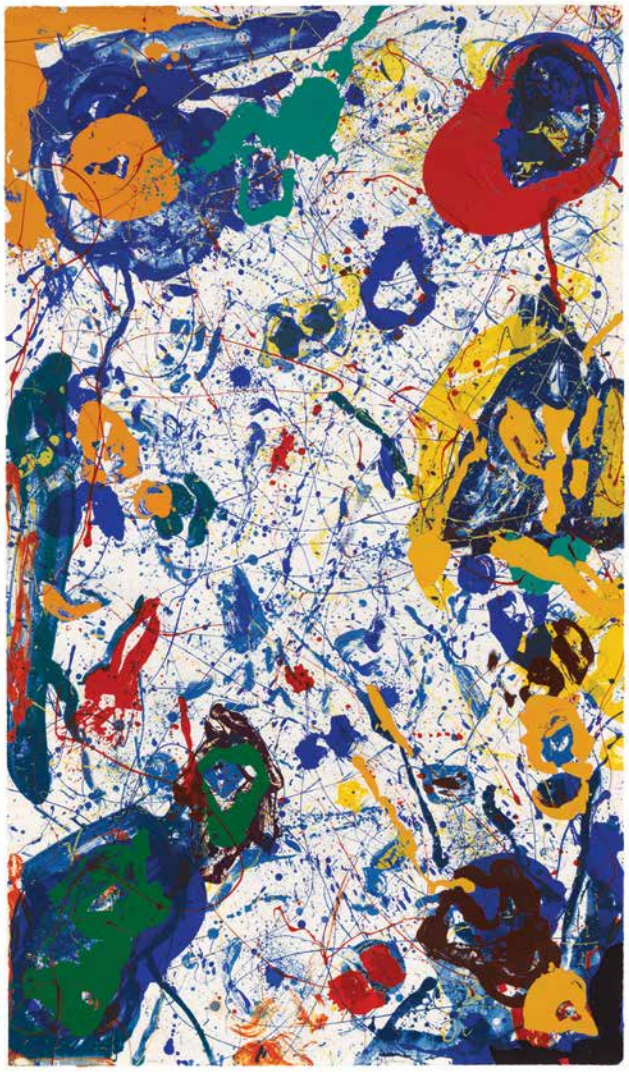
In March, New York City will toast groundbreaking female artists uptown and down. **Sarah Sze** will construct a series of her densely composed installations at the **Guggenheim Museum,** including a projection on the Frank Lloyd Wright building's iconic spiral facade, all with the theme of the passage of time, while **Wangechi Mutu** will fill the entire **New Museum**—also covering the facade—with more than 100 paintings, sculptures, collages, drawings and videos exploring history, colonialism and gender, among other hot-button topics.

Topping the list of fall's must-see shows is an **Ed Ruscha** retrospective at the **Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).** The exhibition, opening in September and traveling to LACMA in April 2024, will span 65 years of his oeuvre with over 250 works. Expect to see not only his breakthrough black-and-white photos of gas stations from the early '60s and his iconic, graphic paintings of words but also lesser-known works by the perennially cool, LA-based Pop and conceptual veteran.

Another artist associated with Pop early in her career will also get her due: **Marisol,** the Venezuelan American sculptor whose chunky, life-size figures were shown alongside works by Warhol and other men at the movement's height, will be the subject of a retrospective bowing in October at the **Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.**

Meanwhile, the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** will reach further back,

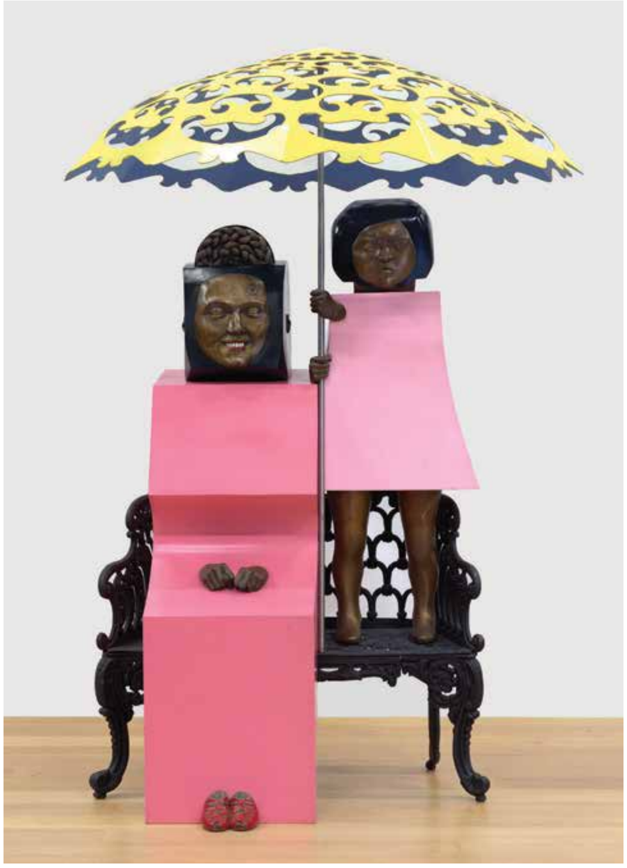




ED RUSCHA: PHOTO: EVIE MARIE BISHOP. COURTESY OF THE MODERN ART MUSEUM OF FORT WORTH; SAM FRANCIS: SAM FRANCIS FOUNDATION, CALIFORNIA/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK AND GEMINI G.E.L. LLC; PHOTO: MUSEUM ASSOCIATES/LACMA; MARISOL: ESTATE OF MARISOL/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

to modern art's nascent rumblings in the late 19th century, with a double-header. First comes ***Van Gogh's Cypresses,*** a look at the crowd favorite's beguilingly stylized trees—including those in *The Starry Night,* which MoMA has graciously agreed to lend—opening in May. Then, in September, ***Manet/Degas*** will delve into the French frenemies' complicated but brilliantly fruitful relationship.

As for galleries, in recent years LA has emerged as an essential city in which to have some real estate. Once **David Zwirner** opens in the first quarter, the international behemoths—Gagosian, Pace and Hauser & Wirth complete the quartet—will all be there, along with plenty of respected homegrown operations. This month, just in time for **Frieze LA, Hauser & Wirth** will inaugurate its second branch in the area, in West Hollywood, with a **George Condo** show. And in May the venerated **Marian Goodman Gallery,** which has spaces in New York City and Paris, will join the crowd with a converted warehouse in Hollywood. Designed by LA firm **Johnston Marklee,** the complex will include 5,000 square feet of skylit galleries in addition to a courtyard garden.



Goodman's enviable roster of artists includes **William Kentridge,** the South African filmmaker who is the subject of a major retrospective at the **Broad** in LA through April 9.

Adding yet more buzz to the SoCal scene: The **UCLA Hammer Museum** will unveil its long-gestating expansion in March. Architect **Michael Maltzan** has spent more than 20 years transforming the institution little by little. Capping off the project is the new **Lynda and Stewart Resnick Cultural Center,** named for the philanthropists who aided the effort with a $30 million gift.

Meanwhile, **Mariane Ibrahim,** the fast-rising gallerist with an eye for artists of the African diaspora, including the red-hot **Amoako Boafo,** is set to unveil a Mexico City location this month in a 19th-century two-story building on Río Pánuco. (Ibrahim's other spaces are in Chicago and Paris.) A show of work by **Clotilde Jiménez,** who lives in Mexico City, will inaugurate the gallery.

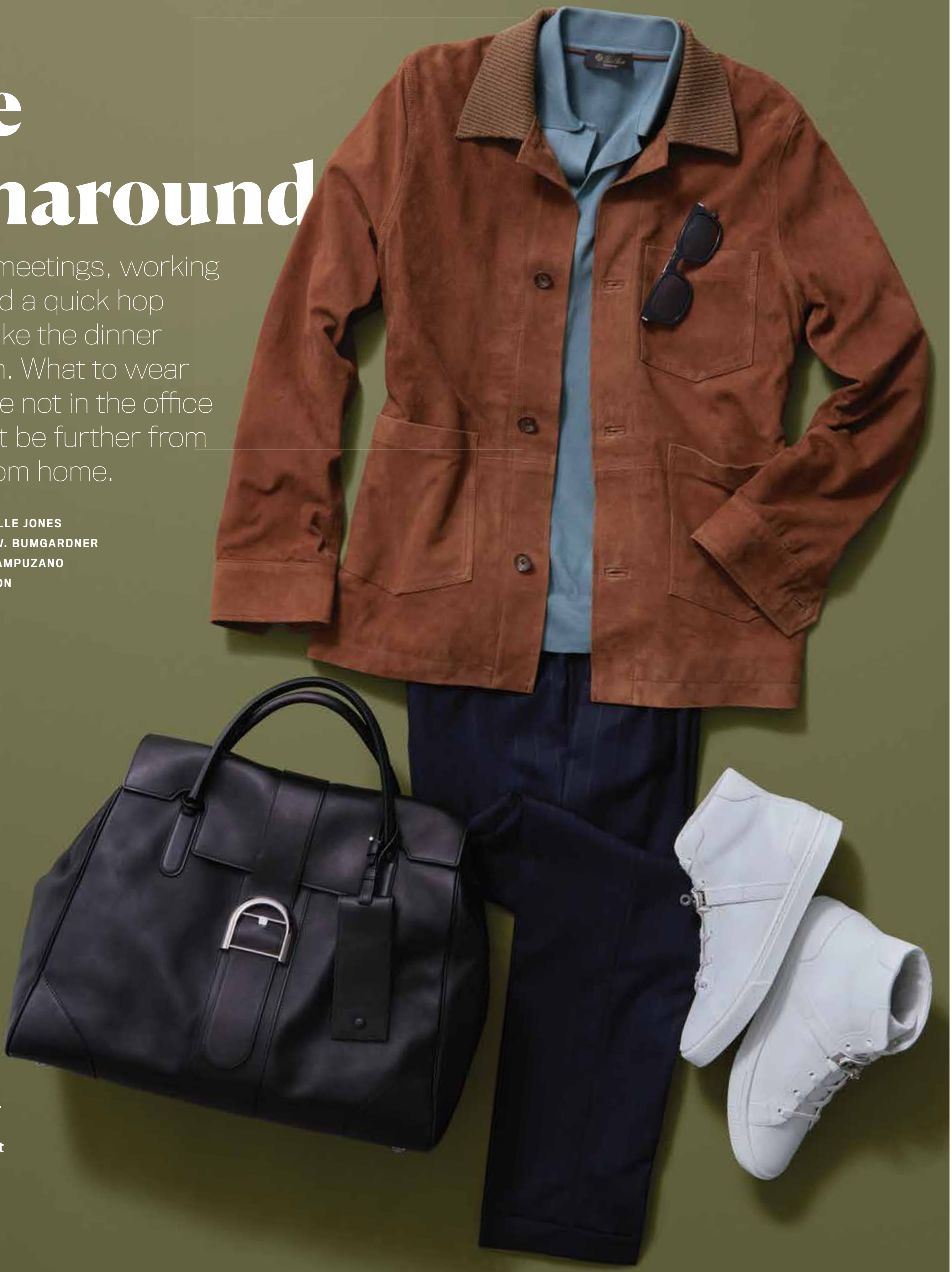
New York is not being cut out of the expansion action. Jay Jopling's **White Cube,** the London-based gallery synonymous with the Young British Artists (YBAs) of the 1990s, is, after years of anticipation, opening in Manhattan toward the end of 2023. But it is eschewing both Chelsea, where a critical mass of players reside, and the relatively upstart locales of the Lower East Side, Tribeca and Brooklyn in favor of the establishment Upper East Side, where it will occupy three floors at 1002 Madison Avenue.

And **Jack Shainman Gallery** is expanding from Chelsea to Tribeca, taking over the Clock Tower Building, an 1898 McKim Mead & White neoclassical gem. Long before it was fashionable, Shainman threw his energy into building a lineup of BIPOC artists; many, including **Kerry James Marshall, Carrie Mae Weems, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye** and **Nick Cave,** are now among the art world's most celebrated names. Cave, coming off an acclaimed retrospective at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and the Guggenheim, will have inaugural-show honors in the fall. **Julie Belcove**

The Runaround

Breakfast meetings, working lunches and a quick hop to (just) make the dinner reservation. What to wear when you're not in the office but couldn't be further from working from home.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JANELLE JONES**
STYLING BY **CHARLES W. BUMGARDNER**
MARKET EDITOR **LUIS CAMPUZANO**
WORDS BY **JOSH CONDON**



HIGH ENERGY
A ribbed collar lends a note of refinement to the hardworking chore coat (ditto the Italian goat suede). Add some kick with clean white high-top sneakers, which will age with as much character as well-loved loafers.

Officine Générale Italian goat-suede jacket, $1,450; **Loro Piana** cotton-and-silk polo, $1,050; **Drumohr** wool pants, about $360; **Delvaux Brillant L'XXL** weekender in Dream Calf, $10,300; **Hermès** high-top sneakers in calfskin, $1,025; **Saint Laurent** recycled-acetate sunglasses, $460.

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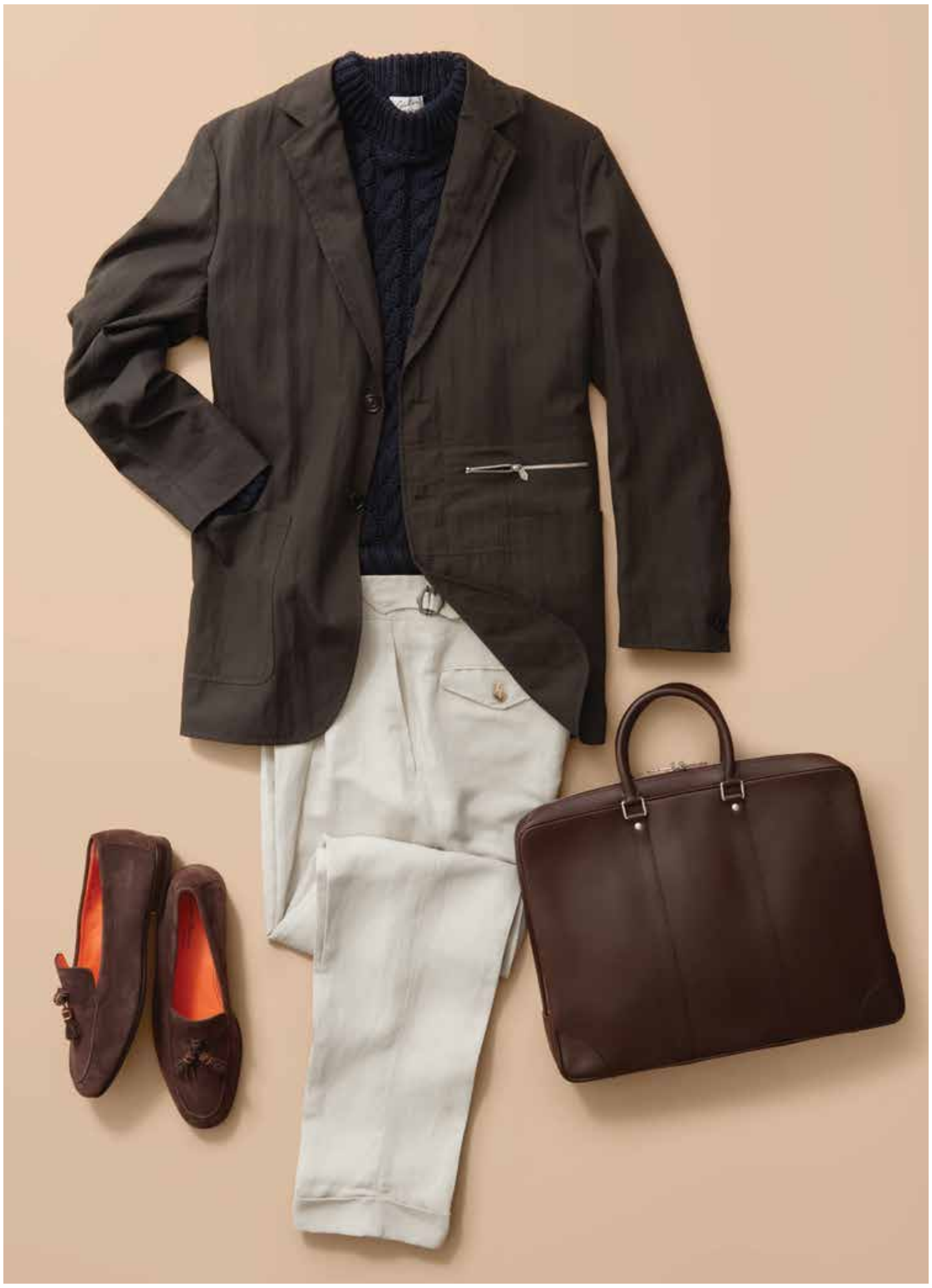


▲

TECH EXPERTISE

Casual, but make it business: A technical blazer, such as this zip-pocket cotton example in a rich carob brown, plays surprisingly straight when paired with tailored trousers and suede tassel loafers. A sleek leather case adds to the modern playboy-industrialist vibe.

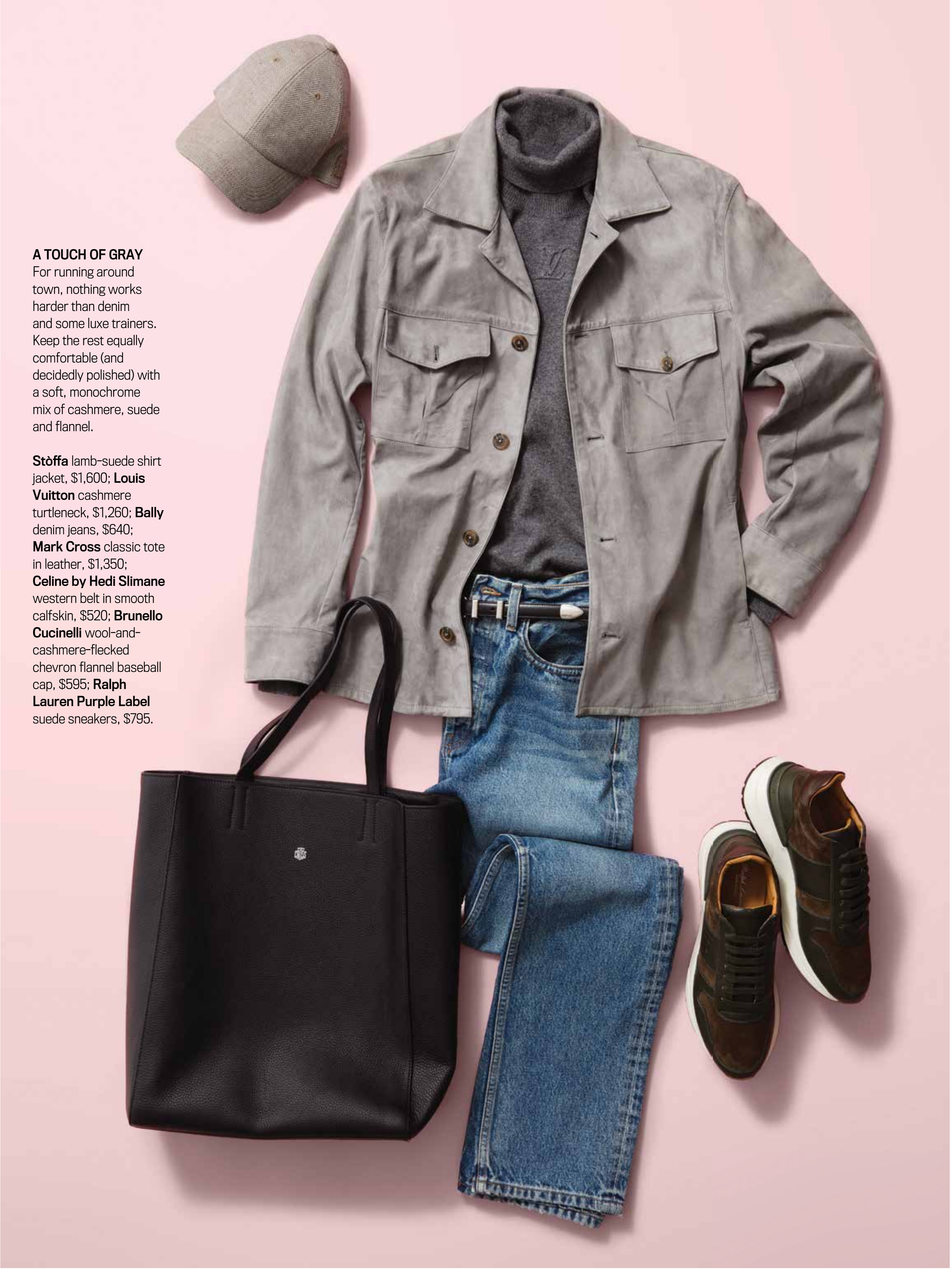
Hermès cotton blazer, $3,150; **Giuliva Heritage** linen sweater, about $1,080; **Canali** linen-and-silk pants, $695; **Santoni** suede loafers, $890; **Louis Vuitton** cowhide Nomade Porte-Documents Voyage Moka, $4,400.

▼

UTILITY PLAYER

The current mood for relaxed dressing has room for more than just safari jackets. Elevated workwear, such as this rugged mechanic's jacket from Tod's, is a simple swap for your current favorite bomber or overshirt.

Tod's washed short jacket, $1,375; **Frame** cotton T-shirt, $68.



A TOUCH OF GRAY
For running around town, nothing works harder than denim and some luxe trainers. Keep the rest equally comfortable (and decidedly polished) with a soft, monochrome mix of cashmere, suede and flannel.

Stòffa lamb-suede shirt jacket, $1,600; **Louis Vuitton** cashmere turtleneck, $1,260; **Bally** denim jeans, $640; **Mark Cross** classic tote in leather, $1,350; **Celine by Hedi Slimane** western belt in smooth calfskin, $520; **Brunello Cucinelli** wool-and-cashmere-flecked chevron flannel baseball cap, $595; **Ralph Lauren Purple Label** suede sneakers, $795.

FOOD & DRINK

Let the Rioja Flow

A tour-de-force tasting of the foundational vintages of Marqués de Riscal shows why the Spanish red has such staying power.

Beware the buzz around "library vintages" and "re-release programs," terms now tossed around with such abandon that they're being used describe bottles that are a mere 10 or 15 years old. For the real deal, look to Rioja, whose wineries hold some of the oldest vinous treasures known to man—and where, this past September, Herederos del Marqués de Riscal hosted a marathon library tasting of 30 vintages from 1862 through 1964, including pre- and post-phylloxera examples.

Marqués de Riscal, with its Frank Gehry–designed hotel and sprawling "city of wine" complex, is among a handful of Rioja bodegas that helped usher the storied region into the modern era in the early years of this century (though its roots reach back to its founding by D. Guillermo Hurtado de Amézaga, in 1858). Its inaugural vintage, from 1862, is said to be the first wine from Rioja that was sold in bottles; prior to that innovation, the liquid was shipped in casks to merchants or sold directly to locals equipped with their own demijohns. And how does that 161-year-old wine drink? Incredibly, we had a chance to discover for

An archival shot of the traditional winemaking process at Marqués de Riscal, in Rioja

1862
1863
1870
1871
1876
1884
1886

Vintage after vintage, the quality and consistency of the wines from Marqués de Riscal's archival cellar were remarkable.

ourselves: The opening vintage poured at the September tasting was that same 1862, bottled under the supervision of cellar master Jean Pineau as part of the Médoc Alavés movement, organized by Marqués de Riscal and six other local winemakers and subsidized by the Provincial Council of Álava (a sub-region of Rioja) which hired the French enologist for a period of five years, until 1867.

Tasting exceptionally old wine is often fraught; while interesting from a historical standpoint, the actual liquid rarely lives up to the anticipation. Which made our pure enjoyment all the more unexpected while savoring the bricky (but still deeply colored) 1862, with its very good acidity and flavors of cranberry and pomegranate with touches of smoke, flint, tobacco and leather. Likewise an 1876 with bright fruit on the nose, high acid and notes of orange, dark chocolate and truffle paste and nice texture on the finish. Vintage after vintage, tasting through standouts from the annals of Marqués de Riscal's 140,000-bottle archival cellar, the quality and the consistency of the wines poured were remarkable.

More so for the oldest vintages, made during the mid-to-late 19th century when there was no understanding of soil pH, let alone any scientific winemaking processes resembling today's high-tech interventions. Their extraordinary longevity was due to the skill of the winemaker, the age of the vines and "the type of cultivated land, which was always the poorest in each area," according to Francisco Hurtado de Amézaga, the winery's technical director. Thanks to such factors, he says, "these wines had the ideal color structure, pH and acidity to be preserved for a long time."

The powerhouse tasting was held in celebration of the release of Tapias de Marqués de Riscal 2019, which will be sold exclusively through La Place de Bordeaux, a network of merchants and collectors that has been operating for over 800 years. For most of its history, the collective offered wines only from Bordeaux but, in 1998, began selling some of the most renowned wines from around the world. In fact, Marqués de Riscal has a long history with Bordeaux, having cultivated Cabernet Sauvignon (blending it with Tempranillo) and selling its wines into the region since the 1870s, while its founder, de Amézaga, lived there from 1836 until his death in 1878.

Sourced from a single vineyard that traces its rootstock (via a series of graftings) back to the varietal's original 19th-century plot, Tapias 2019 has flavors of cassis, black cherry, eucalyptus and dark chocolate, with a touch of smoke. While it's drinking perfectly right now, Hurtado de Amézaga notes that "experience tells us that the wines from Las Tapias estate have a long life in the bottle—a minimum of 40 to 50 to 60 years." Such staying power might sound incredible, but trust us when we say: Believe the buzz.

Mike DeSimone and Jeff Jenssen

FROM TOP: **Pre- and post-phylloxera vintages from the 1800s; a tasting sheet from the historic session.**

Yes, Midtown Manhattan Is Cool Now

The shellfish platter at Le Rock, one of a new crop of midtown restaurants recapturing the neighborhood's glitzier days as a fine-dining destination.

GENTL & HYERS

THIS STRANGE NEW gravitational pull toward midtown Manhattan started with a crab and a cocktail at Le Rock's packed-on-a-Tuesday-night bar, where an open stool presents the opportunity for what could be considered the perfect solo meal: dressed whole Dungeness crab, escargot, snappy red radishes with butter, baguette slices and a Green Chartreuse–laced Bijou Blanc. And the simmering vibe at the new Rockefeller Plaza brasserie, from Frenchette chefs Lee Hanson and Riad Nasr, is as much a draw as its wide-ranging, artfully executed menu of bistro favorites. I shared a snail with the diner next to me, ordered a second cocktail and damn if my icy New York heart didn't melt. This is the midtown we've always deserved.

"Midtown was the last neighborhood in Manhattan to come back to life," says Jeff Zalaznick, co-owner of Major Food Group, whose portfolio includes the Grill and the Lobster Club, in the Seagram Building. "There was a cream-rising-to-the-top effect. You saw lots of people who couldn't withstand a period that was really devastating to restaurants—that made room for the next generation."

Plenty of noteworthy newcomers were in the works pre-Covid, including Daniel Boulud's remake of Le Pavillon inside One Vanderbilt and John Fraser's Mediterranean Iris, which was planned as part of a redesign of 1740 Broadway. Tishman Speyer began redeveloping Rockefeller Center in 2019, hoping to push out chain eateries and attract local talent.

Then the pandemic happened, pummeling commercial real estate and shifting the developer-restaurateur relationship. "The folks who rent buildings recognize that food and beverage is important to community building. Then restaurateurs are recognizing the opportunity—what used to be considered a little staid is exciting," explains Fraser, who also runs the *New York Times* three-star 701West in the Times Square Edition hotel. "Those two waves are hitting one another and creating a moment."

In that ecosystem, you can enjoy tender whole quail slathered with sage butter at Iris, or truffled chopped cheese, with Juvenile's "Slow Motion" bumping in the background, at Tatiana in Lincoln Center. Diners vie for one of just 10 counter seats at Jōji, Daniel Boulud's new omakase spot below Grand Central, or a way into the eight-person private dining room. At Rockefeller Center alone, you can fight over the last bites of Jupiter's pasta with chicken liver while watching tourists ice skate or dip hunks of crab cake into bone-marrow aioli at Five Acres—and that's if you haven't already filled up on *aperitivo*-hour antipasti at Lodi.

Naro, from Ellia and Junghyun Park, serves $195 tasting menus dedicated to traditional Korean cuisine. The abalone mandu, composed of steamed abalone and shrimp-tofu mousse draped with thin sheets of zucchini and finished with a tableside pour of beef shank–kelp broth, is pure softness and subtlety—definitely not designed for the accidental Rock Center tourist walk-in or old-school expense-account meal.

Midtown restaurants have always relied on the area's captive audiences, and the neighborhood's bread-and-butter diners are trickling back. Tourism has reached 85 percent of pre-pandemic levels, and office workers are once again warming their desk chairs. Even if those nine-to-fivers are working from work fewer days than before, Fraser says, they're dining out more often and spending more, too.

Despite some initial concerns that area tourism would impact Le Rock's cachet, Hanson and Riad ultimately decided it was "mostly a no-brainer," according to Hanson. "We thought, 'Let's just build our kind of restaurant that New Yorkers like, and hopefully they'll come.' " On a second visit to Le Rock, I sat at a two-top with just a few inches on either side. With the couple to our left, my husband and I discussed the downfall of FTX's Sam Bankman-Fried, while from the right, a trio of gentlemen were compelled to make sure we ordered the fries. It felt like we could have been downtown or in Brooklyn, crammed into a 40-seat space and sharing a meal with neighbors, but there we were on 50th Street instead, half a block from Saks, feeling like it was once again the center of the universe. **Caroline Hatchett**

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TRAVEL

Golf Italian Style

Play the country's redesigned championship course, just minutes from Rome, before the Ryder Cup teams do.

By hosting the prestigious Ryder Cup, Italian golf looks to get swinging.

MARCO SIMONE GOLF CLUB: STUART FRANKLIN/GETTY IMAGES

All roads leading to Rome, it was perhaps inevitable that the Ryder Cup, golf's most prestigious event, would eventually swing by the Eternal City.

But when the biennial event's 44th edition, the first in Italy, gets going at Rome's newly redeveloped Marco Simone Golf & Country Club this September, the US and European teams won't just be competing for continental supremacy. Organizers say they'll also be playing for the future of Italian golf.

“Golf doesn't have huge awareness in Italy,” says Guy Kinnings, the DP World Tour's Ryder Cup director. “It's the 16th most popular pastime. What's the legacy we want to leave? We want to improve that.”

It won't be easy. According to a survey of the world's golf courses by the R&A, one of the sport's governing bodies, Italy has just 321 golf courses to entertain its population of 60 million, a sub-par ratio compared to mature golf nations such as England, which has 2,270 courses serving roughly the same number of people.

But according to Gian Paolo Montali, Italy's director general of the 2023 Ryder Cup project, the plan does not start by building more courses—first, Italy needs more golfers. Montali wants 120,000 registered players by 2027, up from the 87,000 who called themselves golfers in 2015, when Italy did the unlikely and fended off bids from Germany, Austria and Spain to land the coveted event.

“We need cultural change in this country,” says Montali, who coached Italy's volleyball team to a silver medal at the 2004 Athens Olympics and later worked for Italian football clubs Juventus and AS Roma. “We want to show this is a sport open to all and that it's not as expensive as people think. If they try it, they fall in love.”

Montali also wants more golf tourists in Italy. “A person visiting Rome stays two and a half days,” he says. “When players come here to play golf, they remain here for four and a half days. If the institution understands this and Italy becomes a golf destination, it will have a very significant impact for the country.”

Rome's climate, history, culture, food and hotels are already a draw (those staying at the Rome Cavalieri, a Waldorf

Astoria Hotel, can visit the city's first and only Michelin three-star restaurant, La Pergola), but having a Ryder Cup venue just 10 miles from the Spanish Steps should attract golfers from around the world.

They'll find a stern test of golf, with steep changes in elevation and slick, undulating greens, plus a number of risk-reward holes, such as the drivable par-4 16th, where, statistically, most matches are likely to finish. Ryder Cup courses typically assume pilgrimage status, and Italian golf will be banking on players making the trip to Marco Simone.

Montali says Italy can't afford to miss the opportunity. "It would be stupid not to take advantage of the Ryder Cup," he says. "It must be a jumping off point for us." **Robin Swithinbank**

ROME: EVA KATALIN/GETTY IMAGES

When in Rome

The advantage Marco Simone has over other destination golf courses is that no other links have Rome, one of the world's most sophisticated and captivating luxury centers, just down the road. And the Eternal City is humming with openings, exhibitions and buzzy dining and imbibing spots—some of which, such as those below, merit a trip in their own right. **Andrea Strafile**

STAY

Rome is rediscovering true dolce vita-style hospitality, with the grand Via Veneto welcoming the recently opened **W Hotel**, spanning adjacent 19th-century palazzi, as well as the **Rosewood** when it opens in 2024.

The beginning of 2023, however, belongs to **Six Senses Rome**. Its 96-room, UNESCO-listed 18th-century Palazzo Salviati Cesi Mellini, scheduled to open its doors in March, is spectacular even by the standards of one of the hottest hotel groups of the moment—and with a suitably distinguished address: Piazza di San Marcello, in the heart of ancient Rome and within walking distance of both Via Condotti and the Pantheon.

EAT

Recently awarded two Michelin stars, **Enoteca La Torre** continues to surprise. Housed in the spacious main hall of a villa belonging to the Fendi family—where some of them still live—the airy, light-filled dining area is a seductive backdrop for Campanian chef Domenico Stile's precise, entertaining cuisine; the selection of blind tasting menus is like a cheat sheet to the heart of his rigorous but playful approach to Mediterranean fare. Plus, the wine list is curated by Rudy Travagli, one of Italy's best sommeliers. Or head to the relaxed but impeccably chic **Piazzetta Ripetta**, at the newly opened Palazzo Ripetta, a 16th-century palace on the famous Tridente, for an *aperitivo*, a coffee or a leisurely lunch.

For a vibrant meal that feels a world away from the city's bustle and noise, try **Follie** at the renovated Grand Melià Villa Agrippina, Rome's only resort on Gianicolo Hill. Chef Luciano Monosilio, the man renowned for his unrivaled carbonara, returns with a modern trattoria with a focus on inventive pasta dishes such as linguine with paprika, parsley, oyster and tobiko, and Kamut "fettuccelle" with roasted-pepper extract, lemon and miso egg.

DRINK

The new venue from Patrick Pistolesi, the bartender behind Drink Kong, the Japanese-street-culture-influenced cocktail bar in the Monti neighborhood of central Rome (now ranked 16th on the World's 50 Best Bars list) is a sharp turn away from that venue's hip, *Blade Runner*-nightclub aesthetic, even though it's right next door. Lush but elegantly reserved, **Night** will pay homage to Rome's discreetly decadent nocturnal scene—including its strip clubs—when it opens in Q1 of 2023. Expect a superlative Champagne list.

SEE

In the exact center of ancient Rome, in the Imperial Forum, the artistic space **Forof** was opened by the Alda Fendi Foundation in 2022. Set in the basement of the historic Palazzo Roccagiovine, opposite Trajan's Column, it's an entirely new and uniquely Roman concept that combines archaeology with contemporary art, incorporating audio and visual mediums with spectacular, heretofore unseen Roman ruins.

If Experience, meanwhile, has been organizing tours with exceptional access in the most important art cities in Italy (and beyond) for years. Roman excursions feature secret archives where you can study the original drawings of the Baroque artist Borromini or documents from the painter Caravaggio's various legal trials. The crowning glory: a private after-hours visit to the Vatican's museums and rooms, including a tour of the Sistine Chapel, closed to the public, with an art historian as your personal guide.

WATCHES & JEWELRY

Harry Winston's Blue Period

An extravagant necklace proves the house can flex on more than just diamonds.

Harry Winston was often referred to as the King of Diamonds thanks to his knack for acquiring some of the rarest stones ever discovered, from the 726-carat Jonker to Evalyn Walsh McLean's 94.8-carat Star of the East. It's a reputation that has carried on well past the jewelry magnate's lifetime, with more recent brand acquisitions including the 101.73-carat flawless, colorless Winston Legacy obtained in 2013 and the vivid 18.96-carat Winston Legacy Pink in 2018. The latest jewel to take the spotlight at the *maison*'s court: the Winston Sapphire Legacy, a 43.1-carat Kashmir sapphire set in platinum and dangling from a necklace set with a total of 67.5 carats of round-brilliant, square-emerald, pear and marquise diamonds.

Sapphires of this size are exceptionally rare—those of the Kashmir variety even more so. According to Benoît Repellin, Phillips's worldwide head of jewelry, the stones were originally discovered following a landslide in the Himalayan mountains of Kashmir in the early 1880s and first traded by locals for salt and other consumer goods; after merchants recognized their value, the Maharaja sent troops to protect and control the mines. And though the operation to exhume the gems was exhausted by the end of that century, the project yielded some of the finest sapphires on earth.

"For connoisseurs and collectors, the most special characteristic of Kashmir sapphires, what elevates them above all other gems, is their unique combination of a rich, intense blue with a soft and velvety appearance," Repellin says. "Finding a large crystal from these mines is a true discovery, and the combination of the velvety-blue color, good clarity, large size and important weight make a Kashmir sapphire a wonder of nature." And, of course, a wonder for collectors—especially in such a once-in-a-lifetime piece. **Paige Reddinger**

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History in the Remaking

VINTAGE CARTIER has always been a hot commodity, and the Parisian jeweler has always sold a selection of such pieces in its flagship boutiques, including Fifth Avenue in New York, London's Bond Street location and Rue de la Paix in Paris. But with the secondary market through the roof in nearly every luxury sector, the house has decided to up the offering. "We have a huge demand with a lot of requests from clients," says Pierre Rainero, Cartier's longtime director of image, heritage and style.

Cartier's commercial vintage program, known as Cartier Tradition, officially began in 1996 and was conceived by Rainero, who has been with the company in various roles since the '80s. It has grown from a handful of pieces distributed across its marquee storefronts to an inventory large enough to fill a wing of an exhibition space. While some items are still displayed behind vitrines in-store, most of the pieces, ranging in price from $20,000 and up, are shown to select VIP clients around the globe during high-jewelry presentations.

Among the highlights currently available (as of press time) are a grandiose turquoise necklace set in 18-karat yellow gold from 1956 and a diamond-and-onyx bird brooch from 1929 with a tilted citrine as its centerpiece. "The idea of putting that stone at a certain angle to create a position or an attitude or posture was born from that specific stone," says Rainero. "I like that, because it shows a way of creating that is very Cartier."

The house is so detailed in its restoration process that it can take months to source the correct materials for quality and historical accuracy. "The objective is always to propose a piece at the closest stage to when it was sold the first time—or, I should say, the last time—because sometimes the same piece has been modified by Cartier at the request of a client," Rainero explains. For jewelry, if any stones are missing, the quality, color and antique cuts must be matched with those already present in the piece. "This is always a challenge, because it's part of a spirit, or the essence of a piece, when it was born," he says. Watches receive the same treatment, right down to the movement, with each piece re-created by hand. Often, Cartier can dip into its archive of era-specific stones or watch

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **A Cartier artisan works on a platinum-and-diamond brooch from 1929; Cartier Tradition pieces include a gold, platinum and diamond brooch from 1956; a gold-and-platinum necklace set with turquoise and diamonds; a Cartier Tank watch in platinum and white gold from 1923; a platinum, white-gold and enamel brooch set with citrine, ruby and diamonds.**

components; when that isn't possible, the stones will be sourced or the parts will be re-created exactly as they were at inception.

Pieces are typically bought back from clients, although Rainero notes they are sometimes acquired from dealers, particularly in London (where he says the antiques market is most developed), but rarely from auction houses. The advantage, from the buyer's perspective, lies in the authentication of design, material and process: Each piece comes with a detailed report on the materials used, the history of the design and every step of the restoration processes implemented. Provenance, however, is never disclosed, to protect the identities of previous owners.

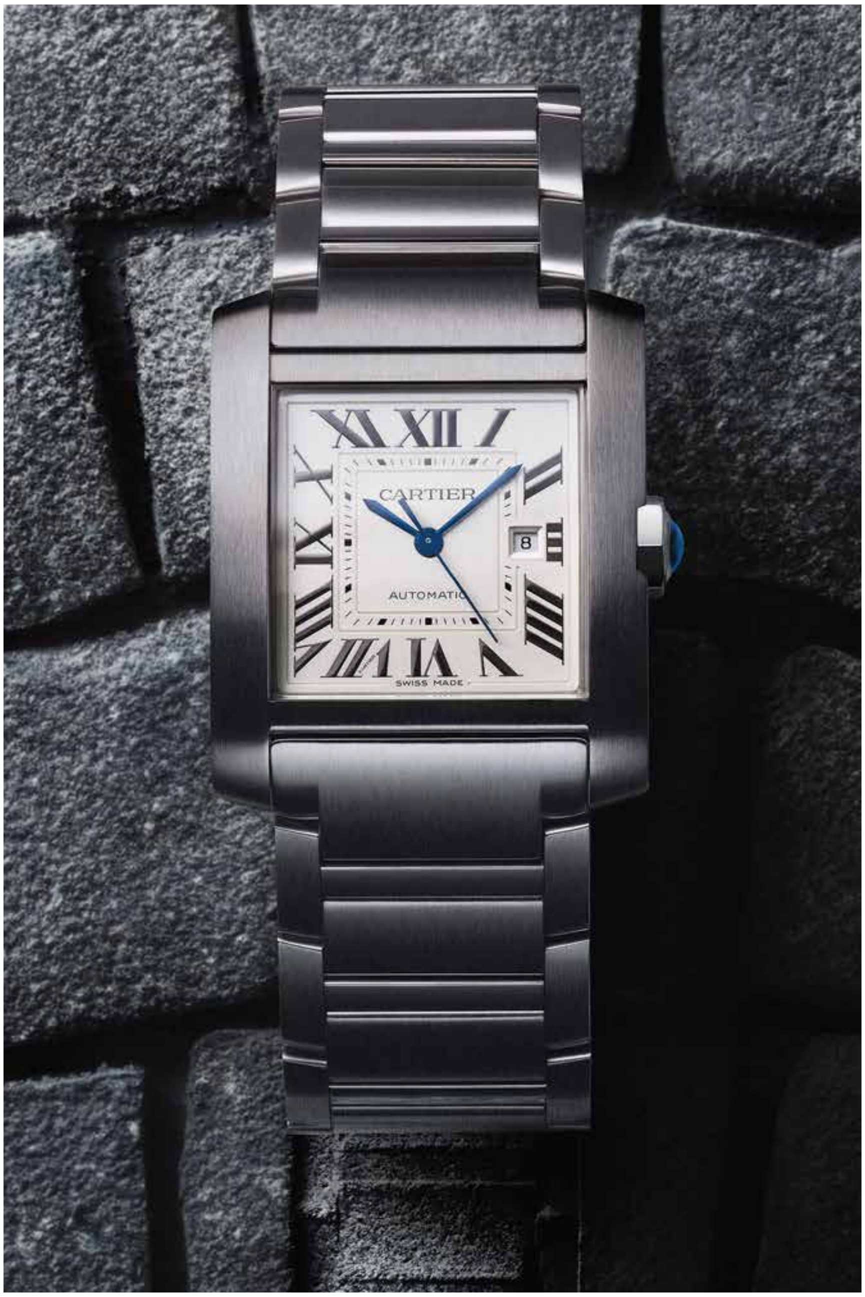
Beyond the guaranteed authenticity and timeless beauty of each piece exists another compelling reason for investing in a Cartier Tradition heirloom. "For a few years now, we have been buying back some pieces from clients from the early days [of the official vintage program]," Rainero says. "And those clients are making money." **P.R.**

French Twist

ONE OF CARTIER'S most beloved staples, the Tank Française, just got a very French makeover—by which we mean that the subtle nods to modernity only enhance the timepiece's effortless, understated elegance.

Updates include more rounded case sides, an inlaid crown sitting closer to the case than in previous models and more compact links in a flexible bracelet that moves together as a single unit. Small details to be sure, but ones which, taken together, offer improved ergonomics on the wrist and an overall sleeker presentation. Available in small, medium and large sizes in yellow gold or steel, with or without diamonds and ranging in price from $3,550 to $29,330, each model features a quartz movement—except for the large edition, which now comes equipped with an automatic winding mechanical caliber.

It's precisely what one hopes to see when such an enduring design is given a modern refresh and especially on point for the Tank DNA: comfort and style, hand in hand. P.R. ●



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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Aaron Rodgers photographed at club Three Three Five in Green Bay, Wis.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MATT LUDTKE**

THE ANSWERS

with…

Aaron Rodgers

Green Bay Packer Aaron Rodgers is one of the finest quarterbacks in NFL history. He had the best touchdown-to-interception rating in the league through the 2010s, is second in the league's all-time regular-season career-passer rating list and is a four-time NFL MVP. A five-time winner of the Best NFL Player ESPY Award, he's almost certainly a future Hall of Famer, and despite nearing his 40th birthday, he continues to deliver the Packers to victory in a notoriously grueling sport.

But football is hardly Rodgers's entire story. A deeply spiritual man, he's a conscientious listener and devoted student, and—as it turns out—an excellent *Jeopardy* host (he had a 10-day guest stint in 2021). You might see him in a State Farm ad or an episode of your favorite TV series such as *The Office* or *Game of Thrones* and, these days, he's also busy acting as an ambassador for Swiss watchmaker Zenith. But Rodgers also knows the importance of disconnecting, which may explain both the level of consciousness he brings to the game and his remarkable longevity in the sport. Here's a look at his life off the field. *OREN HARTOV*

What's the first thing you do in the morning?

Brush my teeth. [*Laughs*] I shower, and it depends on how much time I have. I like to meditate in the morning and then make this coffee drink and then head into work.

How do you find calm?

Reading, meditation—but I have kind of a routine. I like to come home, put my phone aside, put on a record or some instrumental music and then get into a meditation. Light incense. Kind of take an hour to decompress before getting back into life.

What type of instrumental music?

I don't know what genre you'd call it, but a lot of spiritual, ceremonial music.

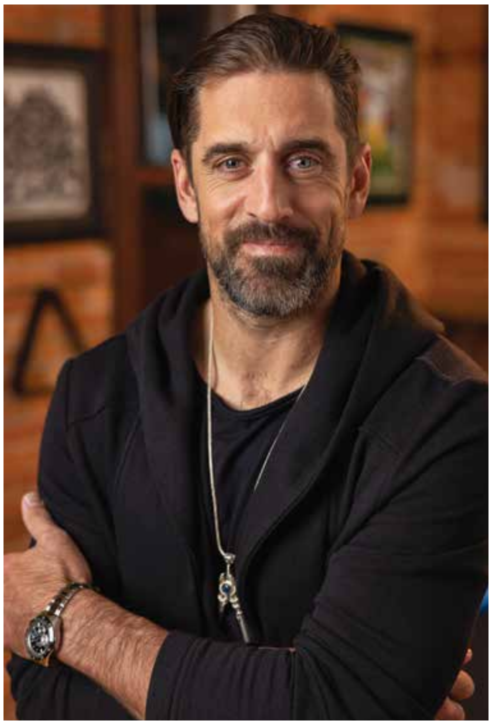
How would you describe your look?

I'm way more about comfort and just adding little accessories—a watch, a necklace. I'm wearing a couple of brands that are super-duper comfortable, like Spiritual Narcissist.[1] And they look good as well, and that's a bonus.

What have you done recently for the first time?

A watchmaking clinic with Zenith in Le Locle, Switzerland. I studied history in college—I've always enjoyed the history of all things, sports and non-sports—and I got a first-class, up-close look at this when I went to Le Locle. I met Julien [Tornare, Zenith's president and CEO] and we really hit it off. I'm always drawn to passionate people, I could see his passion for watchmaking, class and excellence, and that's kind of what I'm all about. ➤

[1] Spiritual Narcissist is an LA-based clothing label of sustainable leisurewear founded by Mark Sauer and Austin Floyd.



FROM TOP:
Rodgers; Hôtel Palafitte in Neuchâtel, Switzerland; Zenith Chronomaster Original; Rodgers's ceremonial necklace gifted by a friend.

What do you collect?

Guitars. A lot of different brands. I've got a 1969 Gibson Hummingbird,[2] but I'm a big Taylor fan as well—the first guitar I bought was a Taylor. I've gotten a few at some auctions over the years, a few Strats. But that Hummingbird is probably my favorite.

Have you played anything new on guitar recently?

I hadn't picked up the guitar in like a month, and right before I came here, I had a dream that I'd forgotten the opening riff to "Tears in Heaven." And the guitar was out because a friend of mine was in town—he's a guitar player and he was playing this morning. And I said, "Let's see if I remember this." Because I had this nightmare that I'd forgotten that riff. And I picked it up and I was like, "Nope! I still got it!"

Do you have a favorite hotel, anywhere in the world?

Hôtel Palafitte[3] in Neuchâtel, Switzerland. I can't pronounce it, but that was an awesome hotel.

What's always in your hand luggage?

I have a sacred stone that I take with me all the time, a smoky amethyst.

What does success look like to you?

I don't think it's measured on the field in wins and losses. I think a lot of it has to do with personal happiness. Self-love is kind of the core to all of it. When you love yourself unconditionally, it's a lot easier to be happy.

If you could learn a new skill, what would it be?

I would love to, at some point, be a good board-sport athlete. I'm terrible on the water, and I'd love to be a good surfer, a good snowboarder and maybe, like, wake surfing. That looks really fun.

Last streaming binge?

House of the Dragon. There's also a group called Untold[4] that's done these short documentaries. There was one about my friend Mardy Fish, and he talks a lot about mental health. There was also one about Tim Donaghy, the referee, who got indicted for cheating and Mob ties. There's been, like, four or five really good ones.

What's the most impressive dish that you like to cook?

I used to say that I make a really mean chili, and then I was told that that's super rudimentary and that I shouldn't brag about it. [*Laughs*] I can do a really good gluten-free corn bread. But I'm a breakfast guy. I can make, from scratch, really good pancakes and waffles.

What is the car you're most attached to?

I'm not a car guy. I only own one: a Range Rover. I love it.

What do you do that's still analog?

I have a button on my phone—that seems pretty analog! It's, like, an iPhone 7.

When was the last time you completely unplugged?

Every day, for an hour when I get home from work. And then there are certain times when I'll just turn my phone on silent and then go into a long meditation that often turns into some sort of extended nap or even into sleep. But I like to start that a little earlier—that could be three, four, five hours of just unplugging and stepping away from the world.

Who is your guru?

I have an acupuncturist who is super meaningful to me; we have esoteric conversations about spirituality. I worked with an amazing monk on meditation. I have an incredible astrologist who's like a pseudo-mom to me, who taught me astrology and is a mentor for me. And I've got an adopted, non-blood big brother who's like a guru-mentor to me as well. ●

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[2] The Gibson Hummingbird debuted in 1960 and, at its introduction, was the company's second-most expensive production acoustic guitar. Models from the '60s have sold for an average of $5,000 on the online marketplace Reverb, depending on condition.

[3] Hôtel Palafitte is a boutique luxury hotel featuring 24 private pavilion suites perched on stilts on the edge of Lake Neuchâtel, providing stunning views of the Alps.

[4] *Untold: Breaking Point* profiles the career of former professional tennis player Mardy Fish and his struggles with anxiety and depression.

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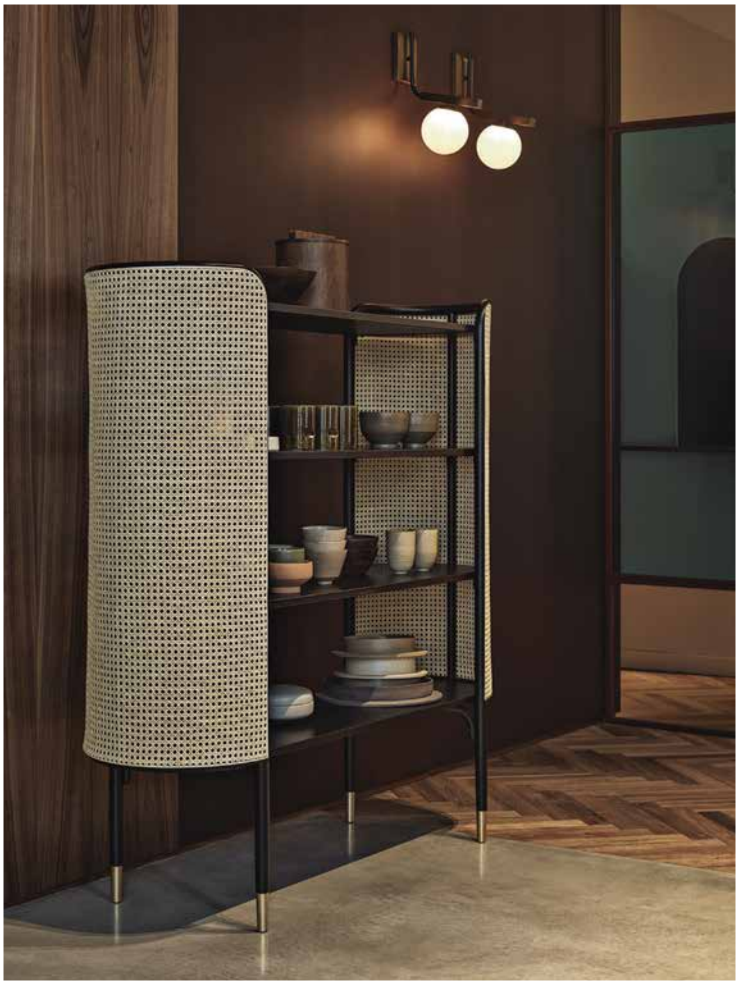
Shelf Life

Five cutting-edge bookshelves that offer more than just storage.

MOS, Gebrüder Thonet Vienna



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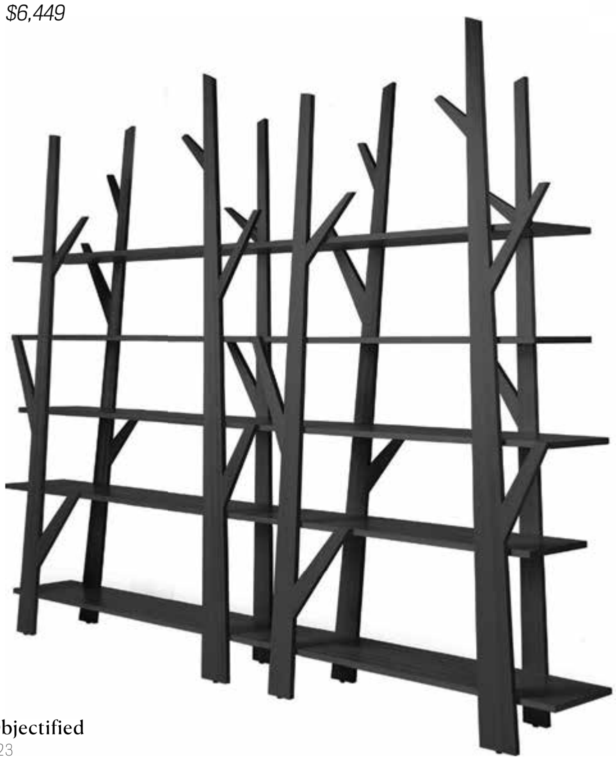
MOS, Gebrüder Thonet Vienna

Over the past several years, caning has made a serious comeback, but for Gebrüder Thonet Vienna, it never left. From Michael Thonet's No.1 chair in 1850, the company's bentwood designs with caned seats have become a byword for Central European modernism. The MOS collection, designed by Danish architect Stine Gam and Italian architect Enrico Fratesi of GamFratesi, couples the Thonet's design principles with 21st-century sensibilities. The bookcase, made from natural stained or black-lacquered bent beechwood, is accented with elliptical cane side panels, while its brass feet add a subtle dose of flair. *$6,449*



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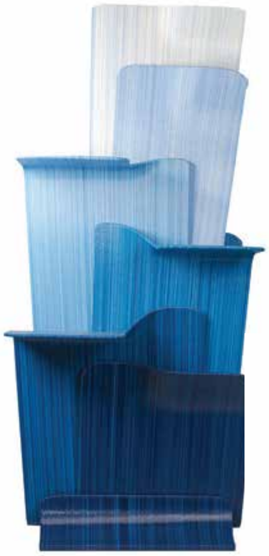
Nostrum, Medaarch

Deeper than it is wide, the Nostrum is a modular display system that features cantilevered shelves for odds and ends flanking a central section for books. The piece contains six interlocking components that are 3-D-printed in a trio of colors, resulting in a swirling, oceanic effect. The shelf is designed by Medaarch, a studio based on the outskirts of the Amalfi Coast that is devoted to sustainability and melding digital technology with craftsmanship. *$14,740*



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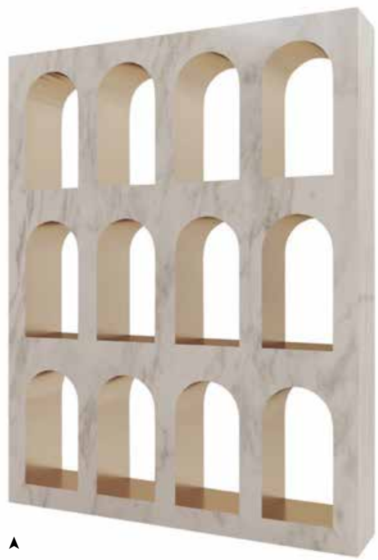
Juniper, Kenneth Cobonpue

Who says a bookshelf need be just shelves and supports? Not Kenneth Cobonpue, for one. The Filipino designer delights in nature, finding inspiration in ocean waves, baobabs and blossoms. In creating the Juniper bookcase, Cobonpue plays with the idea of an enchanted forest. Indeed, one can imagine Juniper featuring in a fairy tale. However, the bookcase blends fantasy with sophistication. In medium or darkly stained oak, it would enliven a den—and in natural oak, a playroom. *From $2,340*



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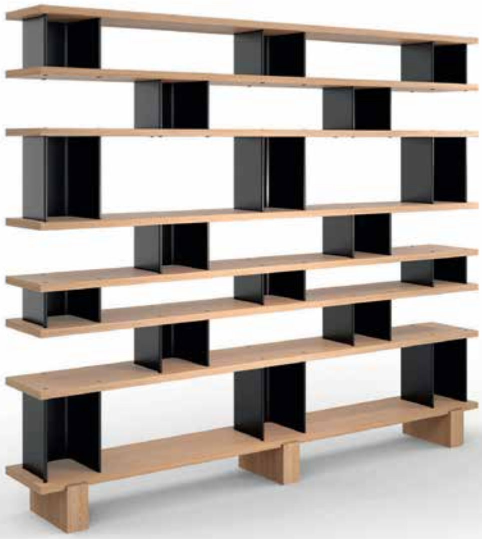
Portici, Dimarmo

Crafted from a block of creamy marble, the Portici bookcase celebrates a classic architectural feature—the arch—and then offers it up in an altogether rectilinear new form. The piece looks exquisite standing solo, perhaps as a room divider; left empty, there is nothing to distract from the natural veining on its polished surface. Alternatively, the dozen arched openings instantly elevate any setting or object. In addition to white Carrara marble (shown here), Dimarmo produces the bookcase, which was designed by Sid&Sign, in Sahara noir marble, green Guatemala marble or Calacatta gold marble. *From $14,255*



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Nuage à Plots, Cassina

Parisian architect and designer Charlotte Perriand designed Nuage à Plots between 1952 and 1956. Her inspiration: a series of floating shelves that she saw at the Imperial Palace in Kyoto, Japan. Recognizing the design's rhythmic beauty and versatility, Cassina, which reissued the Nuage in 2012, introduced a new iteration last year. This modular system is composed of oak shelves and vertical boxes fashioned from single pieces of curved aluminum. The "plots" form the superstructure while offering both minimalists and maximalists innumerable styles and configurations for storage and display. *$16,390* **Marni Elyse Katz**

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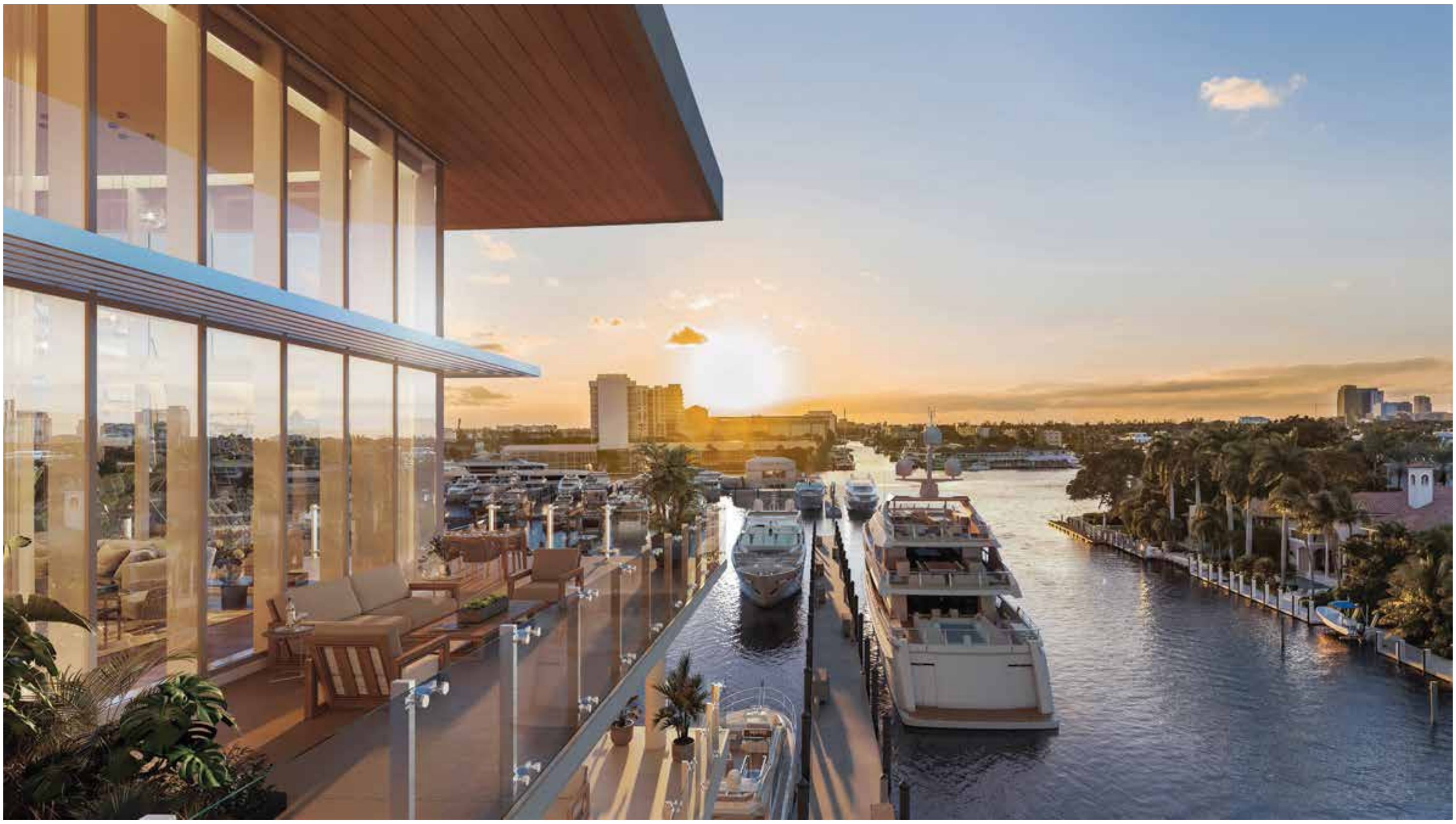

Finally, Fort Lauderdale

Miami's northern neighbor is ready for its real-estate close-up.

Few American cities continue to boom during the pandemic quite like Miami. From Golden Beach to South Beach, Indian Creek to Coral Gables, the South Florida metropolis saw a surge of newcomers lured by its open spaces and tax-friendly business environment. How big was Miami's boom? Total home sales rose by around 50 percent in 2021, according to the Miami Association of Realtors, with median prices up nearly 20 percent from April 2021 to April 2022 alone.

Unsurprisingly, much of Miami's market momentum has spilled over into neighboring cities, most notably Fort Lauderdale—the canal-filled boater haven just 30 miles north of Miami and famous worldwide for its annual must-visit International Boat Show. Bustling and breezy with a major airport connected to Europe, Canada, Latin America and most US markets, the city has long stood as a modest-sized alternative to hustling-and-bustling Miami. But South Florida's real-estate surge has hit Fort Lauderdale as well, with single-family homes and especially new-build condo towers fetching record sums, both along the waterfront and out to less-developed neighboring hamlets such as Pompano Beach and Hallandale Beach.

Along the way, global brands such as Auberge, Four Seasons and Ritz-Carlton are lending their imprimatur to many of the priciest (and poshest) projects, helping to further solidify Fort Lauderdale's status as an UHNW real-estate destination all its own. Longtime industry observer Jonathan Miller, president and CEO of Miller Samuel Inc. Real Estate Appraisers & Consultants, describes the city's ascent as part of what a "market restructure looks like in Florida . . . [where a] pivot to the perception of a 'good place to work' from merely a 'good place to visit' has brought in more luxury brands" beyond the region's better-known locales such as Miami and Palm Beach.

Those brands are helping Fort Lauderdale reach prices unimaginable before the pandemic. In late September, for instance, a 6,000-square-foot penthouse at the Four Seasons Hotel and Residences closed for $15.4 million, the most expensive condo ever sold in both Fort Lauderdale and wider Broward County. The sale follows a previous Four Seasons penthouse that went for $13.6 million, another record tally. Both condos feature private pools as well as access to public spaces by hip London-based interior designer Tara Bernerd. The development, which is connected to an equally splashy hotel, is sold out.

Those record-setting Four Seasons prices have paved the way for other Lauderdale-area developments. The Residences at Pier Sixty-Six, for instance, boast access and exclusive owner privileges to the restaurant-packed Pier Sixty-Six Marina. Pier Sixty-Six's residences will initially offer 62 condominiums sized between two and four bedrooms and priced from $3.6 million. The development, which is expected to be completed in early 2024, offers rare direct access to the city's marina, which buyers clearly covet. "The average Fort Lauderdale condo sale price in Q3 2022 for units over $3 million was up 51 percent year-over-year overall," says Amy Ballon, director of sales for Pier Sixty-Six. "Properties with marina or boat-slip options in Fort Lauderdale were selling at a higher price per square foot than in Miami-Dade last year."

Also within Fort Lauderdale itself is Selene Oceanfront Residences, a 194-condo development close to the Four Seasons. Designed by leading local architect Kobi Karp, the project's two- and three-bedroom homes are priced from roughly $900,000, with top-tier penthouses starting at $10.8 million. And then there's Auberge Beach Residences & Spa Fort Lauderdale, set on a prime 4.2-acre beachfront plot with a hotel as well as 171 Meyer Davis–designed apartments spread among a pair of shimmering towers. The project sold out quickly after its debut in 2019, though resales are fetching strong numbers. Finally, Edition is also launching with a "boutique" 65-unit site priced from $3 million. The public spaces of the residences-only project will be designed by New York–based ODA while the design of the residences themselves will be executed by ethereal Irish designer Clodagh.

OPPOSITE: **The Residences at Pier Sixty-Six offer unrivaled access to Fort Lauderdale's fabled waterfront.** ABOVE: **The East Penthouse at the Selene Oceanfront Residences towers over the city.** BELOW: **The record-setting Four Seasons Private Residences Fort Lauderdale.**

Much as Fort Lauderdale is experiencing a "spill-over" effect from Miami, so too are its closest neighbors. Just north of town, the new Ritz-Carlton Residences, Pompano Beach is currently rising on a wind-swept 2.25-acre slice of sand within a pair of residential towers: the 32-floor Beach Tower, with 117 homes directly on the Atlantic, along with a 14-floor Marina Tower, which has 88 residences set along the Intracoastal Waterway. The project is priced from $4 million to over $10 million in the Beach Tower and from $929,000 to $2.5 million in the Marina Tower. Also in Pompano Beach are a pair of projects from Related, the sold-out Solemar and the new-to-market Casamar, whose 119 waterfront homes begin at $1.5 million and feature architecture and interior design by, among others, David Rockwell. And just announced is Marina Vista Residences, a 121-unit condo on a rare unobstructed inlet between the Atlantic and the Intracoastal Waterway developed by the Chetrit Group.

Lastly, just south of Fort Lauderdale, in Hallandale Beach, is 2000 Ocean, whose sleek, aquiline design is courtesy of Mexican architect Enrique Norten. The 38-floor waterfront glass tower has 64 homes—all at least a half-floor in size and priced from $3.2 million (penthouses start at $10.5 million). The development is among the first of its caliber in the Hallandale area, which is, says project developer Shahab Karmely with just a hint of hype, "now the epicenter of low-key cool, combining the excitement of Miami with a laid-back Malibu vibe."

Although Fort Lauderdale is now commanding record prices, the city still offers more mortar for your dollar than Miami. Smaller and lower-profile, Fort Lauderdale's vibe will always serve as a sleepier and cozier alternative to Miami's raucous energy. "Fort Lauderdale buyers don't want Miami, but rather a smaller city with a lower density," says Scott Gerow, executive director of luxury sales at Compass and principal of the Cotilla Beresh Gerow Luxury Team, which specializes in the Fort Lauderdale market. "High-rise construction has certainly pushed north from Miami, and Fort Lauderdale is reaping the benefits of that expansion."
David Kaufman

LEFT: **Panoramic views from nearly 1,500 square feet of outdoor space.** BELOW: **8899 Beverly was designed by Seattle-based firm Olson Kundig, which is also responsible for the new Bob Dylan Center.**

West Hollywood Wonder

IT DEFINES LIVING LARGE. This newly completed 10th-floor mega-penthouse in West Hollywood's vibrant Arts and Design District sprawls across 6,451 square feet of interior space with an additional 1,489 square feet of terraces for a total of nearly 10,000 square feet of indoor-outdoor living. At the mere touch of a button, almost 300 linear feet of motorized, Swiss-engineered, triple-glazed Vitrocsa windows can power open to offer unobstructed, show-stopping views of the distant San Gabriel Mountains, the Hollywood Hills and Century City.

This East Penthouse—currently being listed off-market for a finger-in-the-wind $50 million—sits on top of the new 8899 Beverly tower, where buzzy Beverly Boulevard meets North Swall Drive. Seattle-based architectural powerhouse Olson Kundig—Bill Gates's firm of choice, which recently completed the Bob Dylan Center in Tulsa, Okla.—was called in to give fresh life to a former midcentury-modern office building originally designed by famed California architect Richard Dorman. Built in 1964, it was home to LA's International Design Center, ground zero for the city's creative community.

In Olson Kundig's hands, the new 8899 Beverly development, masterminded by landmark property specialists Townscape Partners, features 40 total residences, including tandem 10th-floor penthouses. This sexy, furnished East Penthouse offers four bedrooms, five baths, 14-foot ceilings throughout and 17-inch-thick concrete floors.

"It's a dream space for entertaining on the grandest scale," says Fredrik Eklund, founder of the Eklund Gomes Team at Douglas Elliman, referring to the twin chef's kitchens and vast open-plan dining area with a 14-seat wood-and-bronze table designed by firm principal Tom Kundig.

Throughout the penthouse are other signature Kundig custom features, such as solid bronze, leather-wrapped-and-hand-stitched door handles, patinated bronze wall panels and fumed and wire-brushed wide-plank French white-oak flooring. The building's amenities include 24-hour valet, a state-of-the-art indoor fitness center and yoga studio and a lush 12,000-square-foot outdoor deck with pool. For the supercar-obsessed, there are showroom-like private garages with herringbone brick flooring and white-oak wall paneling.

As for that second, adjoining West Penthouse, it's also quietly on the market. Merge the two and—for around a mere $100 million—inhabit, at approximately 20,000 square feet, simply the world's biggest penthouse. Now that's living large.
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Photo Op

For its latest release, the German camera maker Leica resurrects a (very) old favorite, one that marries the photographer's skill with its own exquisite engineering.

BY **ADAM MORGANSTERN** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MARK MANN**

AS MODERN DIGITAL cameras put ever more megapixels and endless features into the hands of the everyday shooter, what does Leica—one of the most revered names in photography—come out with for its latest release?

A film camera.

You read that right. And not even a new film camera, but a reissue of a shooter from 1984, the M6. There's no screen to review your photos, no button to upload your selfie over Wi-Fi, and—perhaps you should sit down for this—it's manual focus. Has the company gone *verrückt*?

Not at all, insists Stefan Daniel, executive vice president of technology and operations at Leica. "The prices for the M6 on the secondhand market have been rising constantly," he says, "and the majority of people who want it are younger." A new generation is embracing analog photography, along with vinyl records, and Leica has been preparing for this moment.

"We never stopped making film cameras," says Andrea Pacella, director of global marketing and communication at Leica, "even when sales of film were zero and we were only selling one camera per day *worldwide*. Any other company would have stopped." And now that there's a bull market, reissuing the M6 was a natural choice. During its initial 18-year run, nearly 175,000 units sold, making it one of the company's most popular models.

Why is the M6 so in demand? Leica believes it's the simplicity. "It has nothing too much and nothing too less," says Daniel. "Just what you need to make great photographs. Nothing else. It gave rebirth to rangefinder photography."

So the next time you find yourself sorting through 5,000 digital photos from your vacation, consider how an M6 may have made things easier. "When you shoot film, you have to think before you press the button," Daniel explains. "It will cost you money, and you only have 36 options. That makes it precious and authentic. Maybe we needed this digital revolution to value film again."

Robb Report visited Leica's home base in Wetzlar, Germany, to watch the manufacturing team prepare this new version of the classic camera for its close-up.

LEFT

① Have Camera, Will Travel

The M6 begins its journey at Leica's Portugal facility, where the company relocated its older machines for producing film-camera parts. "Thank God we didn't throw them away," says Pacella. Technicians give each model over 16 hours of individual attention, crafting the instrument from more than 1,100 parts, rigorously testing it and fine-tuning any adjustments before shipping it to Wetzlar. "Like a great watch, every piece is mounted and checked by hand."

BOTTOM LEFT

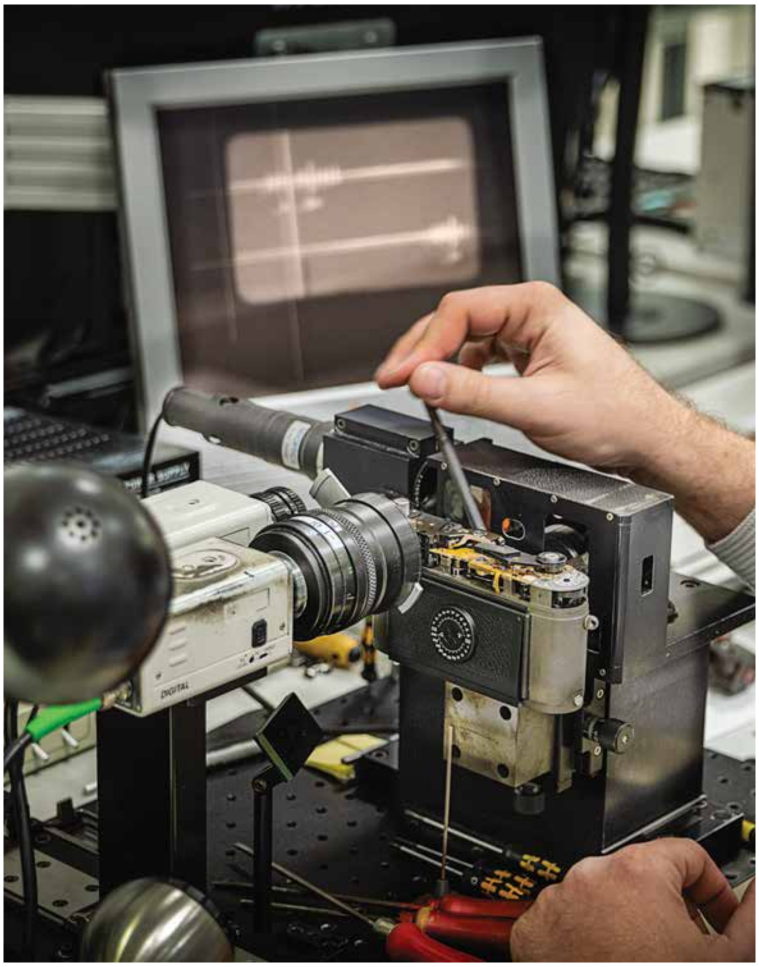
② All-Seeing Eyes

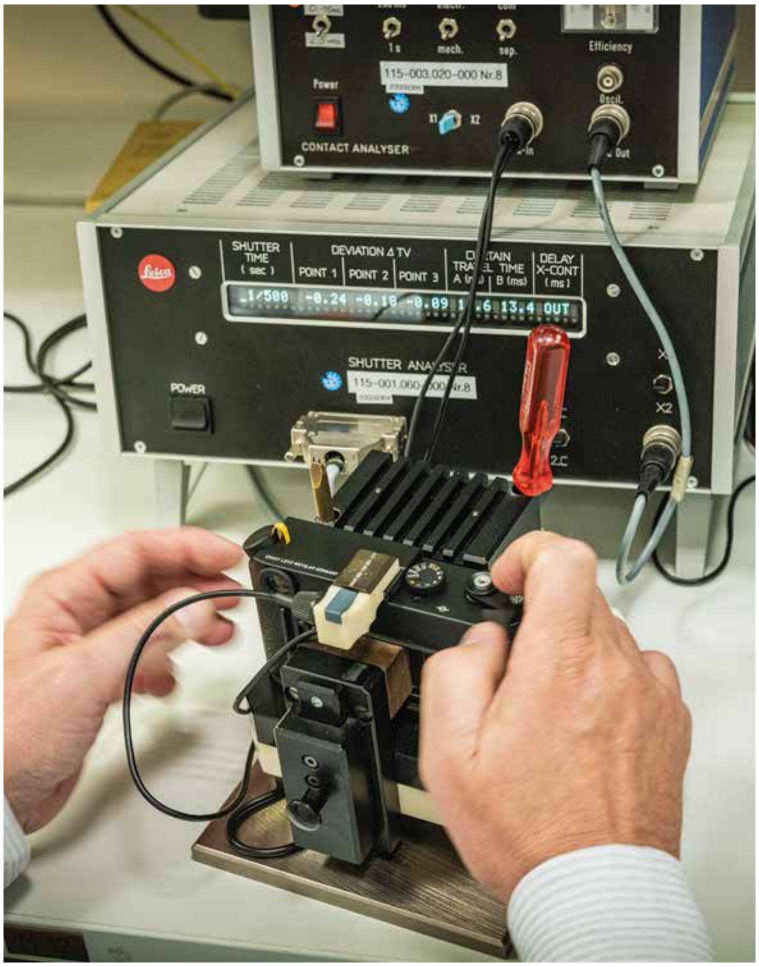
One of the most complex components of the M6 is the rangefinder, which uses a series of prisms and lens elements to help the photographer frame and focus the shot. In Portugal, an optical team and a mechanical team take turns progressively building it from about 150 components. Then, in Germany, an optics expert calibrates the rangefinder using a more precise digital "eye" to see through the viewfinder. These tweaks are the most crucial part of the process.

BOTTOM RIGHT

③ Warning: This Doesn't Make It Waterproof

The cloth shutter system is essentially the same design used by Leica since the mid-20th century. The rubber-coated material was originally procured from a German raincoat company but now comes from a standard supplier. In Portugal, the curtains are run through the old machines by hand for stitching—the crew have maintained a skill no longer required in digital-camera production. In Germany, the shutter is checked at all speeds, from one second to 1/1,000 of a second. ➤

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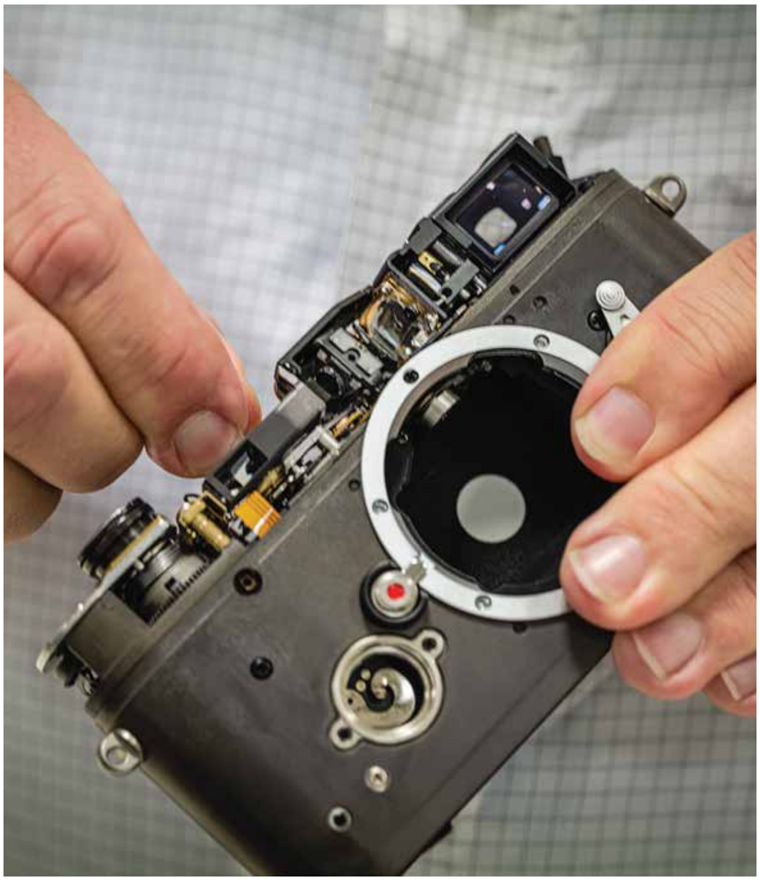

TOP LEFT

4 **The Big Picture**
The main body of the M6 is made from magnesium alloy, and the top plate, which covers the rangefinder and the camera's electronics, is milled from brass. Both are sanded and polished by hand to remove the rough edges, then covered in anodized black paint. Once the inner mechanisms of the camera have passed inspection, they're placed inside and the top plate is attached to the body.

TOP RIGHT

5 **Bells and Whistles and Buttons**
Next, the shutter button, the film-advance lever, the shutter-speed dial and the rewind crank are secured to the top of the camera. The frame counter is checked for accuracy to ensure that you don't lose track of how many of the 36 frames you have left.

LEFT

6 **Local Hero**
A member of the final assembly team lines up the leatherette that will cover the M6 body on an old green press machine, which imprints the "Made in Germany" stamp. Quality has always been key to Leica's reputation and explains why its cameras and lenses actually appreciate over time—the reason many photographers don't mind investing more in a Leica system than in other brands. ➤

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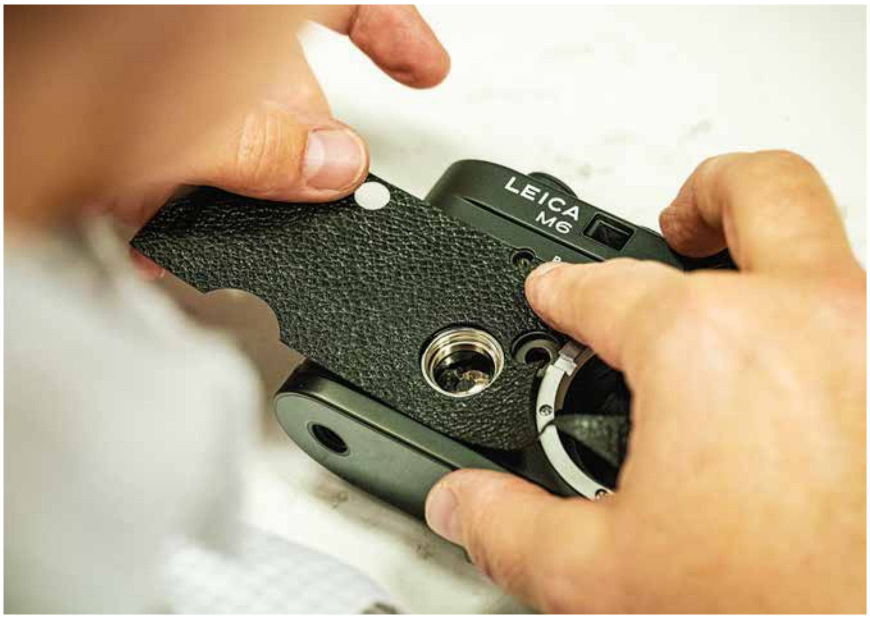

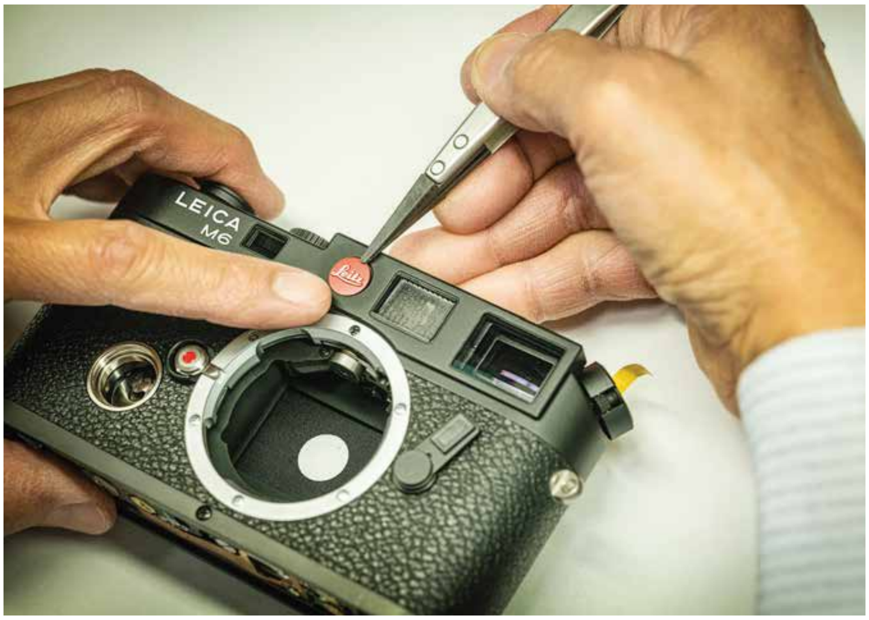

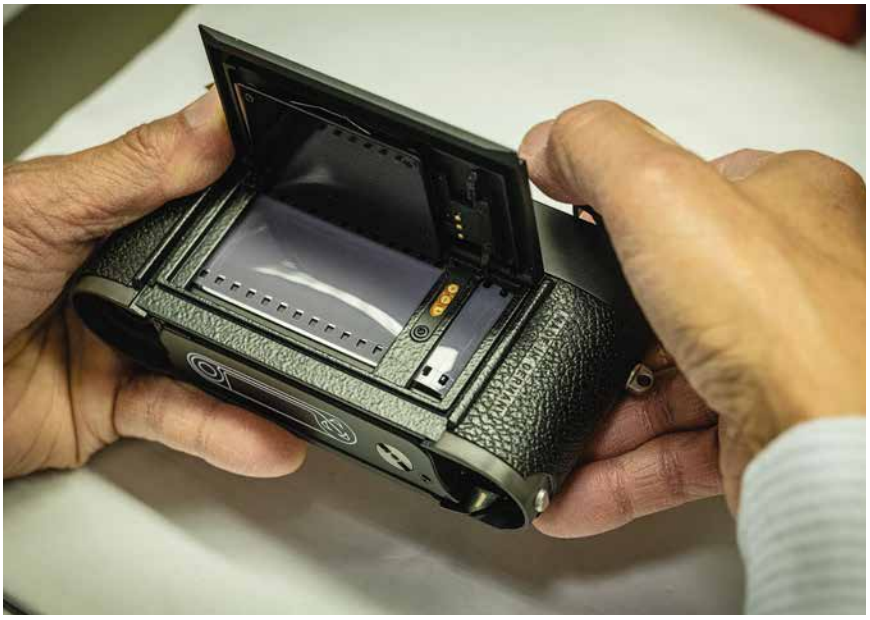

TOP LEFT

7 Getting Dressed

Some parts, such as the lens mount, are temporarily removed from the main body in order to apply the leatherette covering. (Anything that would require adjustment remains in place so as not to defeat the purpose of all the prior testing.) The self-adhesive cover is pulled off the back, and the leatherette is centered over the lens opening, then carefully pressed down to the outer edges.

MIDDLE LEFT

8 Back Where It Began

Ernst Leitz founded his eponymous company in 1869 to make microscopes—it wasn't until 1986 that the name was changed to Leica (a portmanteau of his surname and "camera"), thanks to what had become its most popular product. Here, as with the original M6, the name Leitz is written on the famous red dot, which, along with the camera's distinctive shape, makes the brand instantly recognizable.

BOTTOM LEFT

9 Almost as Confusing as a Rotary Phone

At last the camera is loaded with a dummy roll of 35 mm film and checked to make sure all is working properly. It goes through a wind test and a pressure test to confirm that the film presses and moves along the back plate correctly. Some of the company's most popular YouTube videos feature snippets demonstrating how to load film into a camera—something today's younger generations likely have no experience doing.

BOTTOM RIGHT

10 Everything in Focus

Leica intends the M6 to be more than a retro novelty. "I know someone who is the only American abbot of a Tibetan Buddhist abbey in north India," says Pacella. "He left everything to follow the Dalai Lama. The only earthly possession he still has is his Leica camera, which he uses to document his life. Limited controls [and] manual focusing somehow bring mindfulness. Having to fight some odds is a great way to apply your mind." ●

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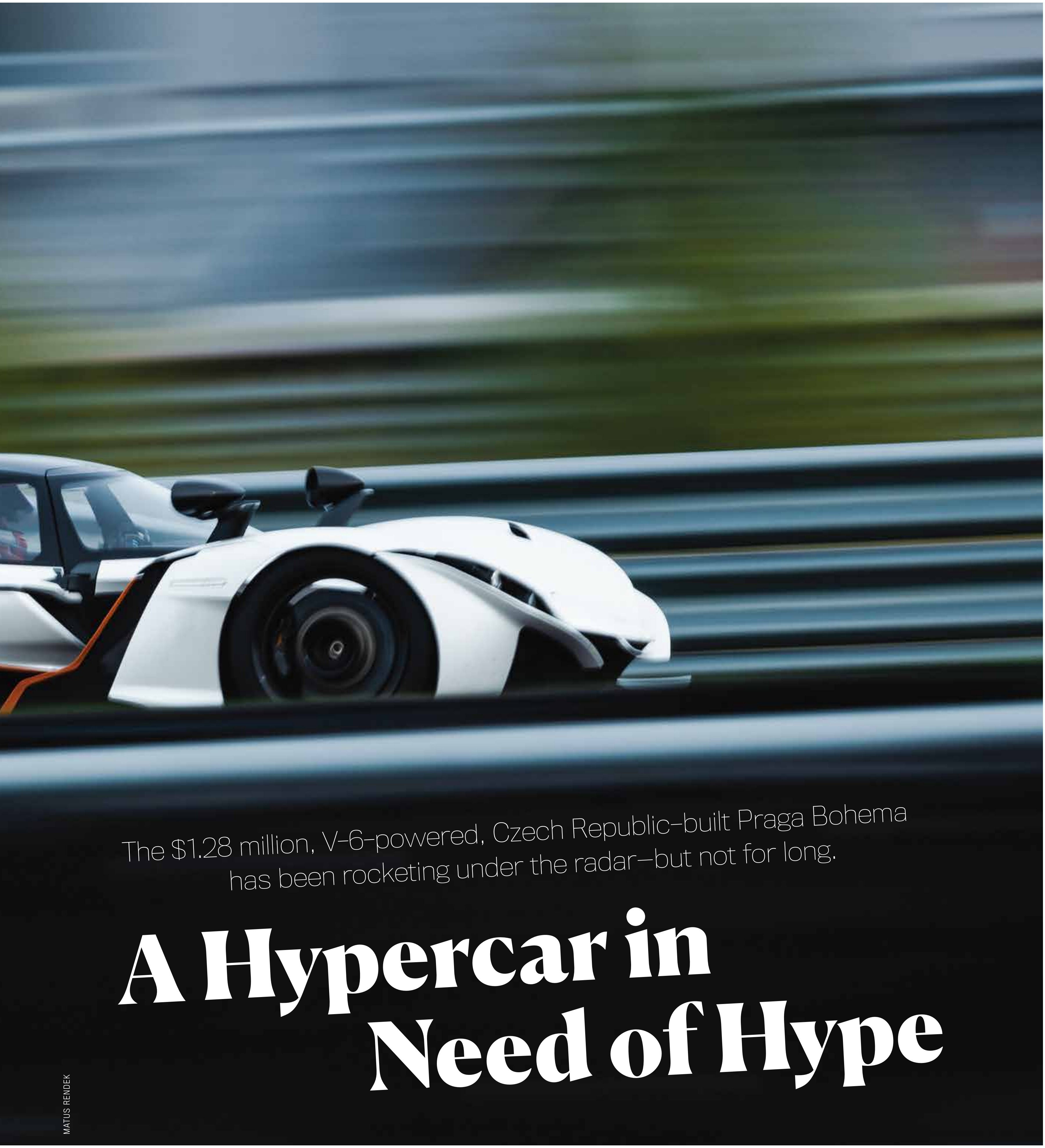


The $1.28 million, V-6-powered, Czech Republic–built Praga Bohema has been rocketing under the radar—but not for long.

A Hypercar in Need of Hype

MATUS RENDEK

W

Would you part with well over a million dollars for a hypercar powered by a Nissan V-6 engine? What if it's built by a company you've never heard of, in a country with no history of producing such high-performance vehicles? Praga, in the Czech Republic, hopes you might. Worth considering? Its Bohema model might represent one of the last chances to order a new hypercar powered solely by an internal-combustion engine.

Praga is no upstart: In the 1930s, it made aircraft as well as more automobiles than Skoda and Tatra, the Central European nation's better-known carmakers, combined. But it is a start-up. Now in private ownership, its focus has shifted to race cars. The marque's first customized road-going hypercar has been designed and engineered almost entirely in-house—rather like the Rimac Nevera, which also hails from a country, Croatia, with no previous history of developing such machines.

The engineering brief was clear: The Bohema was to be comfortable and usable on the road but also the quickest street-legal car on a circuit, prioritizing weight reduction and aerodynamics over extreme output. So the impressively svelte 2,165-pound Bohema's bodywork generates an equally impressive 1,984-plus pounds of

The 2,165-pound Praga Bohema generates more than 1,984 pounds of downforce.

The engineering brief was clear: The Bohema was to be comfortable and usable on the road but also the quickest street-legal car on a circuit.

MARC BOW

downforce, melding the tires with the tarmac under cornering while keeping drag low and feeding cool air to its oxygen-hungry turbo engine.

But Praga also decided to make the Bohema beautiful, turning its semidetached, race-car-like panels into a work of futurist art, seemingly in motion even when standing still. Take the improbably long and elegant arms on which the wing mirrors are mounted, which extend from the central fuselage to the edge of the car and are almost level with the roof. Or the vast, subtly curved rear clamshell, which informs you just how low the mass sits in the chassis. It's stunning and a repudiation of the notion that aero now forces such cars to look generic.

The originality continues inside. You enter downward, through what's more a hatch than a door, into a cockpit so tight that the two egg-shaped seats are arranged with the passenger sitting lower and slightly behind the driver so as not to clash shoulders. Yet it's remarkably comfortable once you're situated, with a motorsport-meets-luxury aesthetic unlike anything else on the market, exquisitely finished in carbon, Alcantara and milled aluminum.

The 700 hp, 3.8-liter twin-turbo V-6 is from a Nissan, but not just any Nissan—the mill is the same as found in the high-performance GT-R model known as Godzilla for its track prowess. Like that car, the Bohema has a soundtrack that's coarse but unintrusive, and while the race-spec Hewland sequential manual gearbox changes with a purposeful, audible *thunk*, it isn't jarring. Visibility and maneuverability are surprisingly good for what is effectively a road-legal Le Mans racer, and with 1.7 cubic feet of luggage space in each sidepod, road trips are, if not easy, at least not out of the question.

Yet touring is obviously not the Bohema's prime directive. Even if it can't quite match the instant torque and all-wheel traction of an EV such as the Nevera, the Bohema is still utterly thrilling—and borderline terrifying: Its acceleration is at the very boundary of what your brain and body can cope with. The hiss and flutter from the turbos' wastegates, once considered unrefined, add a dimension of character missing in this increasingly electric age. And the noise, ferocity and mechanical nature of the performance are enough to convert EV advocates right back to gas.

Signed off on by Romain Grosjean, a Formula 1 and IndyCar star, the handling is sublime, too, the Bohema's feather weight made visceral in the car's ever level posture and its zero-lag response to steering inputs. Of course, the Bohema sheds speed as ferociously as it adds it, with the carbon-ceramic discs leaving you hanging in the six-point belts.

Only 89 examples will be made, with around a quarter of that number to be sold in the US. Maintenance and repair of stateside cars will fall under the purview of between four and six specialist dealer partners across the country. With its standout performance and reassuringly guttural vocals, the Praga Bohema makes for a fine swan song for the internal-combustion engine—you heard it here first.

Ben Oliver

Building a New Utopia

Utopia
PAGANI

UNLIKE IN THE natural world, where profound complexity often expresses itself within elegant design—think of the Fibonacci spiral found in a sunflower's center—the modern automotive landscape is mostly an expanse of mass-market homogeneity that has taken the form right out of function. Pagani Automobili, however, remains synonymous with exquisite engineering *and* artisanship. Christopher Pagani, head of marketing and son of founder Horacio Pagani, explains what fuels the boutique Italian automaker's approach and why its latest model—the 864 hp Utopia hypercar, which starts at just under $2 million, is limited to 99 examples and sold out a full year before launch—is a bit of a maverick. **Viju Mathew**

Describe the ethos of Pagani. We consider it a combination of art and science. It's a philosophy that dates back to Leonardo da Vinci, who my father first read about when he was 12 or 13 years old and who he still studies on a daily basis. As for the other main pillars of the brand, it's definitely the fact that every car we do here in Modena is an extension of the client. Then, we develop our cars to be at the pinnacle of technology found in the market.

When you say "an extension," how much of the client factors into each production? The goal of my father has always been to find the excitement in the client. When you build such a small amount of cars per year, you can really spend time with your clients and understand their hobbies, their personality. The more you listen, the more you're able to translate that emotion to the car.

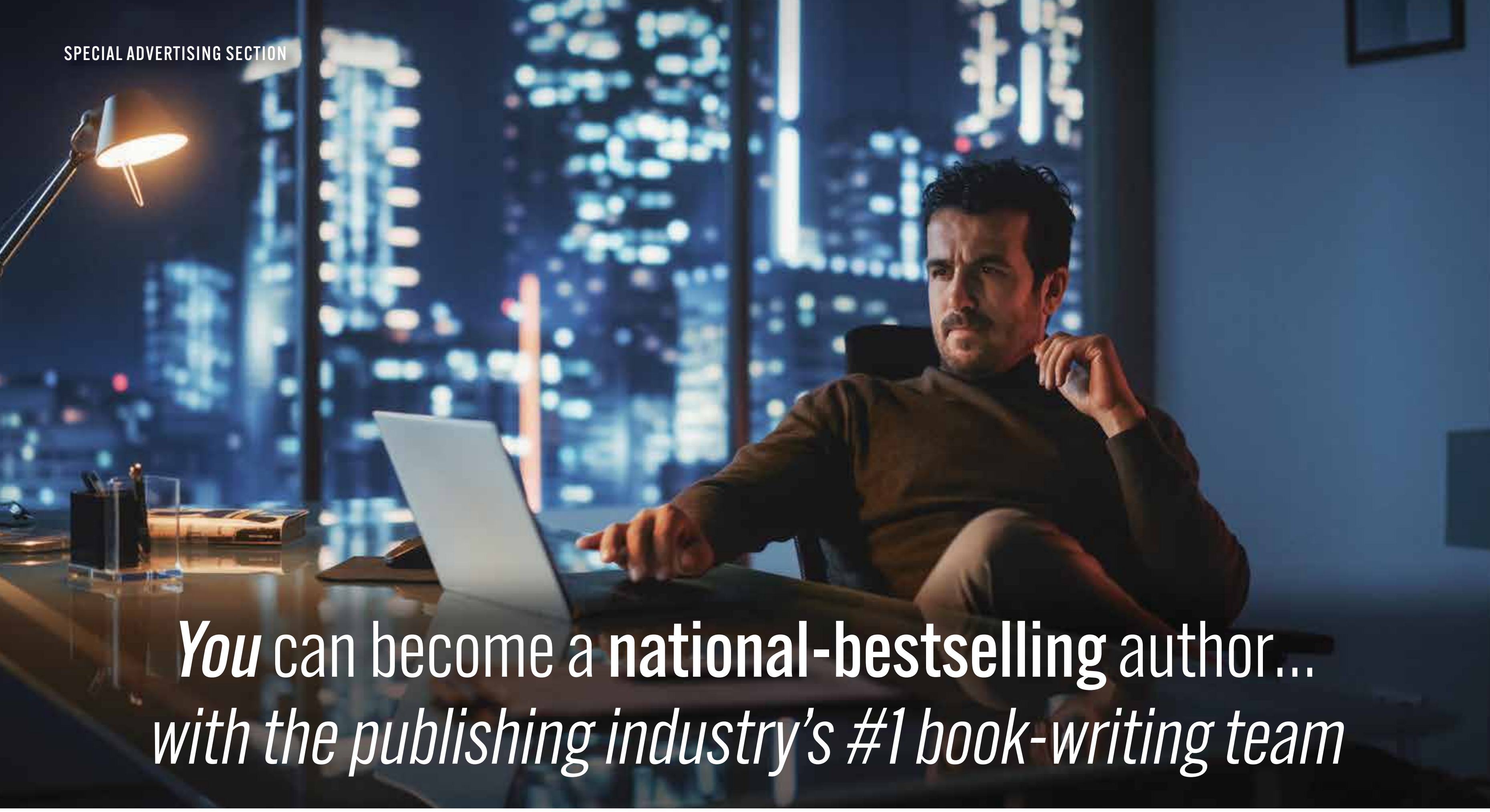
What was the inspiration for the new Utopia? And how long did it take to develop? It was very important for us to create something that was still using the internal-combustion power train, so it has a V-12 engine without any hybrid system. And one of the things we always wanted to bring back was the manual transmission. The Utopia adds very smooth, clean surfaces to the body, but even though it may look like a simple design, the details of the engineering make it a very complicated car. The downforce is the same or higher than our Huayra Roadster BC, which has tons of flaps and different aero flicks. Most of the companies around us take 18 to 24 months to create a car. The Utopia took six years. It's about challenging yourself to get the detail you really want. Next year is our 25th anniversary, and this is our third model.

Christopher Pagani, son of the eponymous marque's founder Horacio Pagani, takes a moment in one of their rarefied models.

You mentioned the smoother approach to aero—how else does the Utopia differ from your previous models? When we create a new car, we don't carry anything over from other vehicles. The Utopia is a new way of looking at the driving experience because it's a twin-turbo V-12 that has 1,100 Nm [about 811 ft lbs] of torque. To manage that amount of torque in a car that weighs only 1,300 kilograms [2,866 pounds] is ridiculous. And then we wanted 21-inch wheels at the front and 22-inch wheels at the back—that's a huge tire that Pirelli created specifically for this car. The bigger tires are a design feature but also help the drive dynamics.

You said it was important that the Utopia showcased an internal-combustion engine. Are you under the same timetable for electrification as larger marques when it comes to the European Union's emissions regulations? We've been afforded more freedom than others when it comes to those rules. We recently received an update that small manufacturers can use internal-combustion engines for a far longer period before needing to go toward electrification.

Back to Leonardo da Vinci: What do you think his reaction to the Utopia would be? When we did the launch of the Utopia, we were able to have six original drawings from Leonardo displayed next to the car. I think he's looking at us and is very critical, like my dad. He's not going to tell you he loves it—he's going to smile, but that's it.



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WATER

Drama in the Round

A classic Italian fishing-boat design looks to reshape the US market.

APREAMARE: ALBERTO COCCHI

The newest trend for express cruisers in North American waters is based on a centuries-old Italian fishing boat. The traditional *gozzo* rounded stern and bow are immediately recognizable, and while the original style featured masts and sails, today's interpretations are more likely to have planing hulls and high-performance engines.

But true aficionados are just as enamored with the Rubenesque design and romantic history of the vessel as they are with its modern handling characteristics, viewing the *gozzo* as the ideal platform for a prized one-off rather than a cookie-cutter acquisition. "We spend a lot of time customizing the boats—like a tailor-made suit," says Giovanni Aprea, sales director of Apreamare, whose family has been in the business since 1849.

Apreamare, based along Italy's Gulf of Naples, has the richest heritage among those specialist builders keeping the *gozzo* going. And as the first yard to develop a planing *gozzo*, it has also been most willing to embrace new style-specific trends. Even with all the curves, Apreamare's popular 35-footer is the spitting image of a center-console craft, but with its semicircular swim platform and rounded bow, there's no mistaking its DNA.

The builder's new Gozzo 45 is a serious weekend cruiser with a three-stateroom layout, twin 600 hp Cummins

Cantieri Mimi's curvy Libeccio (left); the retro-but-contemporary Apreamare 45 (above).

inboards and a cockpit that features a U-shaped lounge, an eight-person dinette and sunbeds. The 45, which can reach 30 knots, has wood trim throughout, harking back to the days when the boats were made solely of timber. Yet the interior is unapologetically modern, with a neutral palette that incorporates mustard-and-turquoise trim in the staterooms.

For an even more contemporary take on the style, the yard's new Gozzo 35 Speedster is designed for the outboard-obsessed US market. Its trio of 300 hp Mercury Verados will push the boat past 40 knots—a far cry from its wind-powered predecessors lazing through the waters along the rocky Ligurian coast.

Fratelli Aprea, now in its sixth generation of boatbuilding, shows that the category is open to multiple interpretations. The family running this Sorrento-based yard is distantly related to Apreamare's founders, but the differences between their *gozzo* models are striking. The Fratelli Aprea line features modern fiberglass hulls, but the substantial mahogany detailing is a direct link to its wood-boat heritage. The yard has a mill where large, hand-selected boards are cut to size before carpenters book-match the pieces, perfectly mirroring the opposing grains.

"You're talking about an old-world build philosophy where carpenters still do detail work with hand planes and work on 150-year-old benches," says Michael Sinacola, president of Fratelli Aprea USA. "If we change that, the boats would lose their artisanal quality."

Sinacola spends months at the yard each year to ensure that imported boats are built to US specs, including oversized navigation screens for the helm, air-conditioning and extra speakers for the cockpit. But the craftsmanship on the two-stateroom 36 Hardtop is a clear differentiator, from the teak decks and mahogany brightwork on the exterior to the cabin's custom mahogany walls, cherry accents and teak-and-holly pinstripe flooring. "We wanted the same level of finish as a private-jet interior," Sinacola says.

Cantiere Mimì doesn't have the lineage of the Aprea clans, but this second-generation yard has serious *gozzo* chops. The Naples-based builder made its first 15-foot launch in 1975 but has advanced to a new 44-foot Libeccio 13.5 Cabin, which features a vacuum-infused composite layup for lighter weight and greater strength. In profile, the boat has a 1960s-cruiser look, but the interior is modern and minimalist, with striped wooden doors and burnt-sienna trim, while multitiered, semicircular platforms at the rear punctuate the *gozzo* motif. "The area I love most is the stern," says Domenico Senese, who runs the atelier his father started. "It's an area of great comfort and transformability—an unusual feature for a boat this size."

And that's the beauty of the *gozzo*: Even after almost 175 years, its curvilinear shape remains both edgy and surprising. **Michael Verdon**

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New York-based McIntosh Laboratory has been fine-tuning vacuum-tube technology since 1949.

VAN ZANDBERGEN

TECH

Keeping the Glow Alive

Once nearly obsolete, vacuum tubes are again illuminating the audio landscape—and still can't be beat for their lush, natural sound.

Prior to Bell Labs' first working transistor in 1947, which ushered in the advent of semiconductor technology and the computer age, every long-distance telephone call, radio and television broadcast, radar signal and sound recording was made possible only through the ubiquitous vacuum tube. Developed from the electric light bulb in the first decade of the 20th century, vacuum tubes were largely relegated to surplus stores by the 1960s—but even today they remain essential in industrial applications such as particle accelerators, MRI scanners and even microwave ovens.

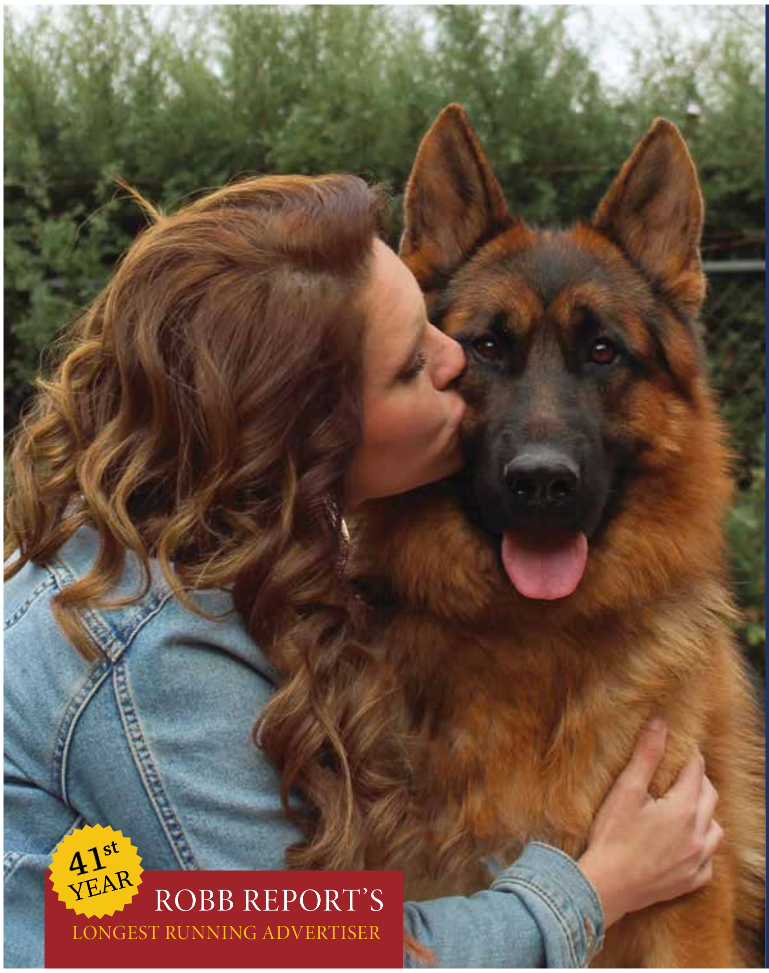
This amplification device also endures in music recording and reproduction, where tubes are championed by some designers, musicians and listeners for their sonic charms—ample enough to cause some to forswear the transistor amp forever. "The difference between tubes and transistors is like the difference between watching a widescreen 70 mm film print in a theater and a DVD on a home digital projector," says Charles Whitener, CEO of tube-and-electronics manufacturer Western Electric in Rossville, Ga. "Music played through transistor electronics has a certain compression and thinness, while a vacuum-tube system has a voluptuous, musical soundstage with front-to-back depth. It's lush, it's real . . . it sounds human."

Whitener is such a believer he bought the rights and technology to manufacture the long-defunct Western Electric 300B, the most famous audio tube of them all. Invented in 1938, it was made continuously for 50 years until AT&T, then owner of the brand, shut down the plant; production resumed only after Whitener's acquisition a decade later. Amplifiers designed to utilize 300B tubes are low-powered and expensive but have legions of users who find their sound more natural, seductive and immersive than that of any other tube or transistor amplifier.

In addition to the rare 300B, there exist a great number of tube types. Electric-guitar amps, for example, routinely use vacuum tubes because their warm, engaging sonic signature can't be duplicated by any transistorized amp. While American manufacturer Audio Research claims to have "brought back tubes" to high-end audio during the 1970s, McIntosh Laboratory, founded in 1949, patented its Unity Coupled Circuit Output Transformer technology that same year for use in its won't-fade-away tube amps.

Today, McIntosh offers many dozens of solid-state components, but its MC275, designed in 1961 and now in its sixth generation, is regarded as one of the most iconic—and sweet sounding—ever made. "When [vacuum tubes] are asked to amplify a signal past their limits, they distort the music differently than an overloaded transistor does," says Charlie Randall, president of McIntosh. "You can listen to a tube-based system for hours at a time and never want to turn it off. Audiophiles call that a lack of 'listener fatigue.' "

Some Japanese designers have been vacuum-tube proponents all along, with acolytes around the world keeping their audio altars aglow with components from small companies such as Air Tight, Leben and Shindo, swearing by the sound and listening to nothing else. Perhaps the late Ken Shindo, whose famous bottle-green gear has achieved cult status among devotees, once stated it best: "They are tube amplifiers because we feel this is the most satisfying way to reproduce music." **Robert Ross**



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WINGS

Airships on the Rise

The bygone-era craft is returning, but the new generation will be more like traveling on a superyacht than a private jet.

OPPOSITE PAGE: **LTA's Pathfinder 1 in Mountain View, Calif.** THIS PAGE: **The Airlander 10 will come in a luxury version (top); Atlas's airships will be used for "sky yachting" (bottom).**

> **"It's a quiet, magical experience that's very unlike the artificial feeling of flying in an aluminum tube."**

Airships, which for centuries have reflected the inventive spirit of visionaries such as Leonardo da Vinci and Jules Verne, are currently experiencing a renaissance. Though they'll never compete with jet aircraft for long-distance travel, airships offer low operating costs, reduced infrastructure requirements and significantly lower carbon output.

And the advantages are particularly pronounced in the field of regional travel, where growing pressure from governments and environmental groups is threatening to restrict the commercial air-travel sector. In an effort to anticipate future regulations, Spanish carrier Air Nostrum recently ordered 10 Airlander airships from Hybrid Air Vehicles (HAV) of Britain.

The Airlander 10, which is expected to be certified and flown commercially in 2026, can carry approximately 130 people and cruise between 50 and 70 knots using noncombustible helium for buoyancy and four kerosene-powered reciprocating engines for propulsion—a system that will burn 90 percent less fuel than similarly sized aircraft. And it will also be configured for the luxury market, with a handful of suites to complement its ability to stay airborne for five days.

Then there's Google cofounder Sergey Brin. His LTA (Lighter Than Air) Research outfit is headquartered both in Mountain View, Calif., and at the Goodyear Airdock hangar in Akron, Ohio, where its Pathfinder airships aim to advance the cause with new technologies and zero emissions.

"Pathfinder is a case where someone is willing to take a risk and has all the necessary capital," says Brandon Buerge, an associate professor with the Department of Aerospace Engineering at Wichita State University and veteran of three airship programs. If Pathfinder is successful, Buerge forecasts sizable investments in the sector for applications such as cargo and regional travel.

Buerge likens his own flight experience on a Skyship 600, from British supplier Airship Industries, to being on a yacht. "The bow of the ship would ride up over any thermals and then drop down again—a lot slower and more peacefully than a conventional aircraft," he says. "And if you're idling, which you can't do in a fixed-wing aircraft, it's a quiet, magical experience that's very unlike the artificial feeling of flying in an aluminum tube."

Israel-based Atlas LTA Advanced Technology is touting its long-range Atlant 30, which accommodates 20 passengers across 10 suites and should also be ready to fly in 2026. "It will have the capability to land on any surface, including water," says Atlas CEO Gennadiy Verba. "This is real sky yachting."

Also playing to the maritime connection, at least in name, is OceanSky Cruises. The Swedish operation recently announced a partnership with experiential travel and yachting firm Pelorus and is planning a 36-hour itinerary that takes travelers from Svalbard, Norway, to the North Pole at an altitude of 1,000 feet.

The journey with OceanSky Cruises will combine exclusive cabins and haute cuisine with epic sightseeing through the glass flooring and windows. Cofounder Carl-Oscar Lawaczeck says initial customers will pay $200,000 for the excursion, comparable to the top-tier pricing of last year's first space flights on Virgin Galactic and Blue Origin. And he believes that airship travel will command a premium before it becomes more accessible: "The high end leads the way."

Basem Wasef

The Public Side of Private Aviation

ONE OF THE GREAT perks of private aviation is right there in the name: privacy. But the ability to stay hidden from prying eyes applies only inside the cabin. Social-media accounts that broadcast flight patterns of noteworthy names—including Drake, Taylor Swift, Nancy Pelosi, Kim Kardashian and LVMH chairman Bernard Arnault, as well as numerous sanctioned Russian oligarchs—have racked up millions of followers, with the Twitter handle @ElonJet gaining international attention before Musk himself suspended the account. The spotlight it shines is equal parts geeky hobby, gawker-level curiosity and emissions shaming—and Arnault, at least, eventually got sick of the glare, selling his Bombardier Global 7500 last fall and switching to charter flights with private passenger manifests.

And it's not just business magnates, celebrities and politicians who are vulnerable. Anyone traveling via a private jet is sharing information transmitted through the plane's black box. For safety reasons, Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) technology transmits GPS coordinates, altitude, ground speed and other data to air-traffic controllers and nearby aircraft—but it also gives rise to potential dangers ranging from corporate espionage to threats of violence.

"It's akin to driving on the interstate and having anybody pick up your license plate to see who's in the car and where you're going," says Doug Carr, senior vice president of safety, security, sustainability and international affairs for the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA). "This isn't just about lifestyles of the rich and famous. It's about basic security and not being able to track people in real time—which, by the way, is illegal anywhere else."

The issue came into focus a decade ago, when a restaurant-supply firm's CEO, who used aircraft to conduct business, was cyberstalked and tracked by competitors. Then there were returning wounded military veterans who were confronted by anti-war protestors at their home airports. Martha King, who runs pilot-training academy King Schools with her husband, John, had several unstable individuals harassing her from out of state. On one occasion, one of them showed up unannounced and threatened her. "Privacy sounds abstract, but it got personal for us quickly," says Martha. "Now we're more cautious flying into unknown airports."

The FAA is trying to help. After ADS-B became mandatory in January of 2020, the agency created several programs that allow jet operators to opt out of sharing tail numbers, helping to conceal passengers' identities. Many private owners signed up for the Limited Aircraft Display Data (LADD) program, but sources that don't use FAA data aren't obligated to obey those restrictions and can still publish the information emitted from a jet's transponder.

The FAA moved to fix that loophole by creating a way to temporarily disguise a jet's tail number through the Privacy International Civil Aviation Organization Address Program (PIA). But joining that program is significantly more complicated than signing up for LADD, requiring physical modifications to the transponder and temporary call signs—and when it comes to the latter, "you'd likely need to change that code on a routine basis," says Heidi Williams, NBAA's senior director of air-traffic services. Besides, the new codes are not recognized outside US airspace.

As we've seen from broader celebrity culture, if there's enough public interest, the trackers will find a way—the FAA can't stop enthusiasts or paparazzi from physically watching jet traffic at a local airport and then sharing those tail numbers, for example. An FAA spokesperson says that the agency is expanding PIA for US-registered aircraft to include FAA-managed international airspace, but no mechanism currently exists to hide the call signs, since the ADS-B systems have no on-off switch.

Meanwhile, the NBAA is in talks with trade associations in Canada and the European Union, which account for 40 percent of global business-aviation activity, to create an international PIA-type program. But universal adoption would require "a conversation in every part of the globe on what this program means and how it would interface with air-traffic-control systems," says Carr.

All of which leaves pilots like John King—whose wife was physically endangered—frustrated, angry and wondering: "Why should we have to give up our privacy whenever we get on an airplane?" **Jaclyn Trop** ●

ILLUSTRATION BY **STEVE SCOTT**

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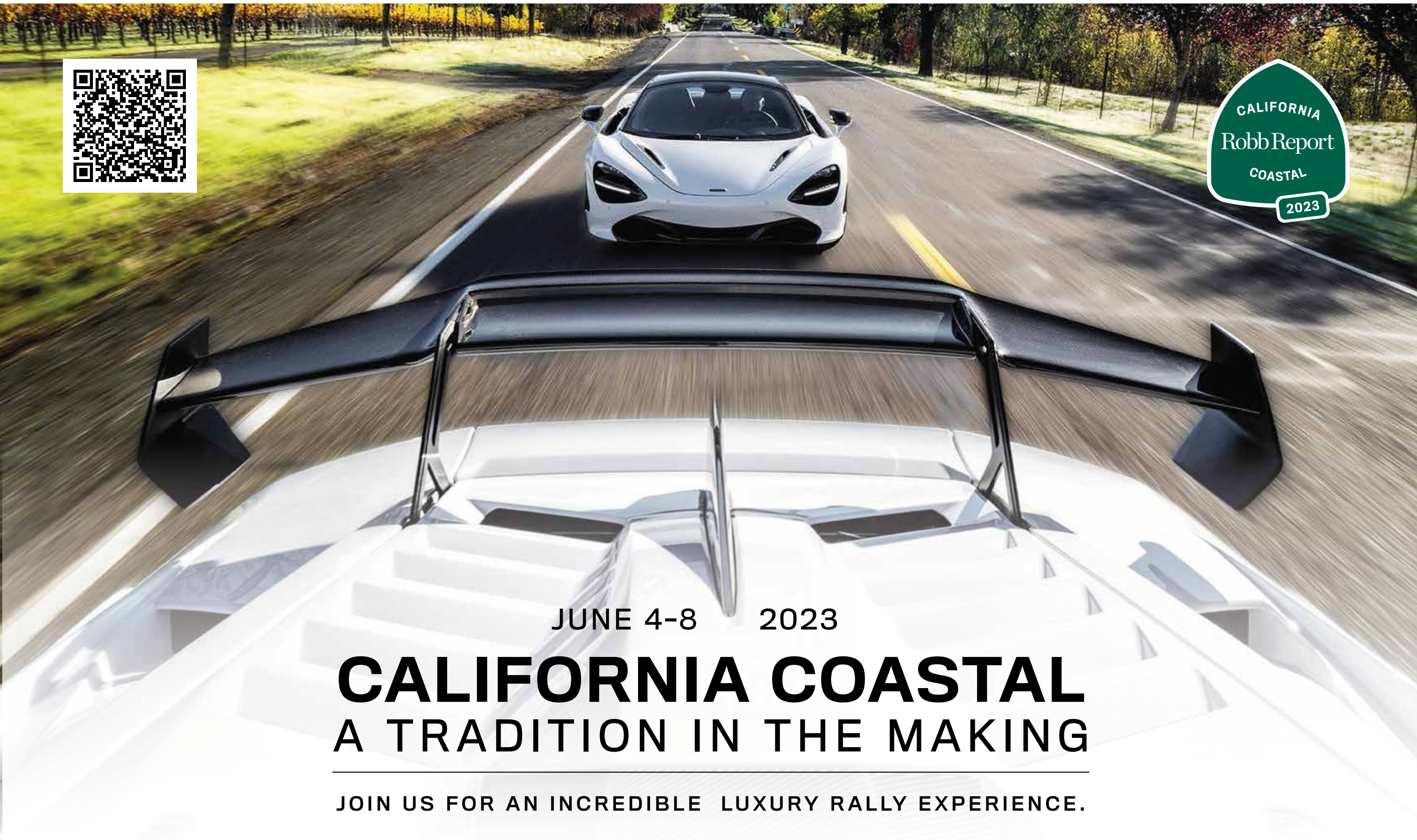
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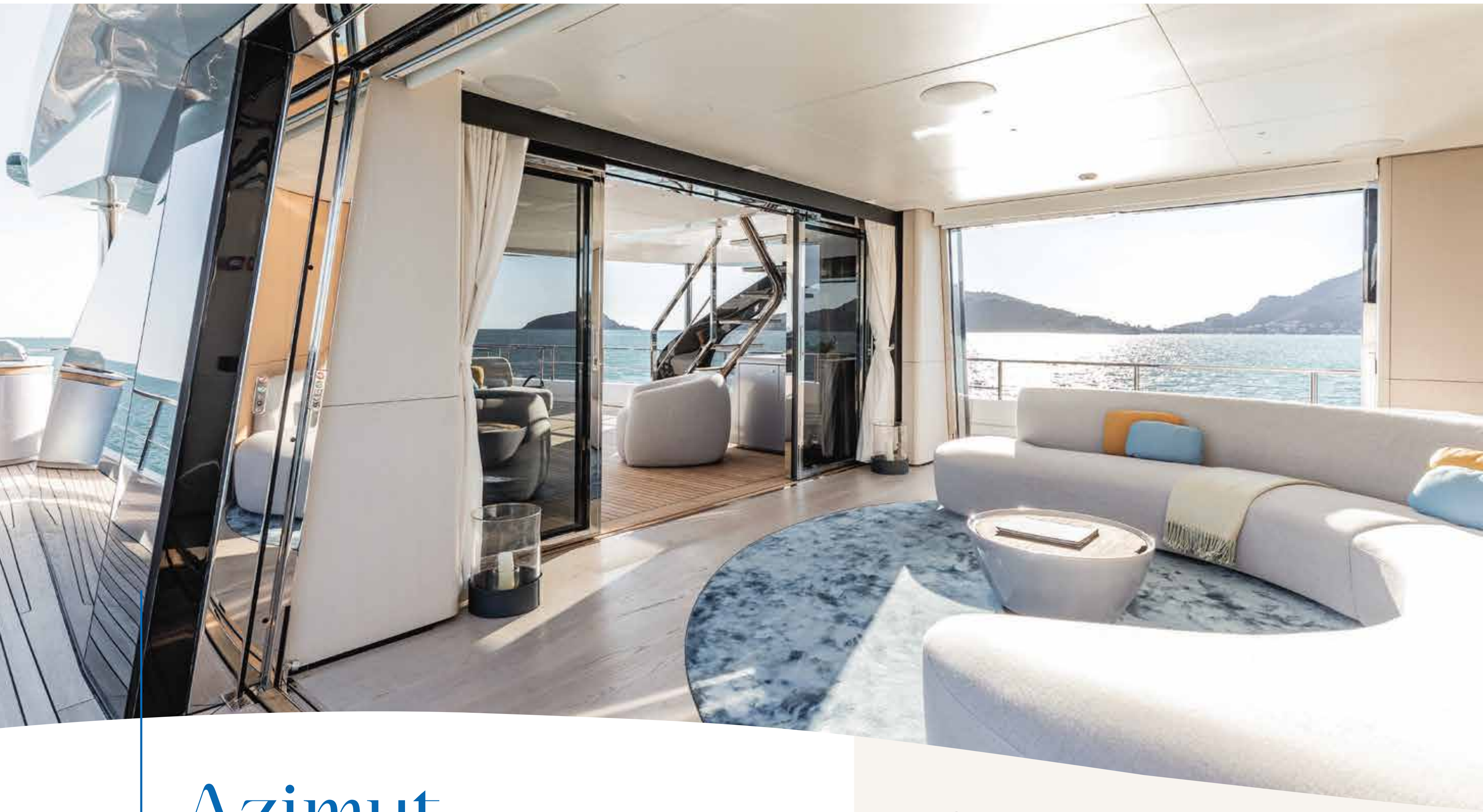

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With her original design and modern character, the Grande 36M is a superyacht that synthesizes cutting-edge style. All elements of the yacht combine to visually blend interior and exterior spaces. The concept offers a barrierless lifestyle, naturally blurring the boundaries between onboard pleasure and the majesty of the ocean.

With the Grande 36M, Azimut introduces the first semi-walkaround upper deck, which runs flush from the stern to the bow. The side windows are fully retractable, offering access to the sea and joining the sky lounge with the aft terrace, which creates the immense area of the Infinity Skydeck. Continuing around to the bow, we come to a sunbathing area and a whirlpool tub made of glass.

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It is now part of the Azimut|Benetti Group, designing steel mega yachts from 37 to more than 100 meters in length. The firm also produces a range of superyachts in composite materials, from 34 to 44 meters. Pioneering technology, important design collaborations, the highest standards of quality and iconic elegance have become Benetti's hallmarks, along with the embrace of new challenges in the design of its superyachts.

Benetti's research in the field of diesel-electric and hybrid propulsion systems led to the 2006 launch of the world's first diesel-electric yacht—the Benetti Ambrosia 65M—and culminated in June 2020 with the launch of the Benetti Luminosity 107M, which is still the world's largest hybrid yacht.

And now there is the B.Yond 37M, Benetti's new low-emissions Voyager, which may rightly claim to be the yacht with the lowest impact in the world in its category, thanks to the combined introduction of the E-Mode Hybrid system (developed exclusively with Siemens Energy) and SCR catalytic filters on the main engines.

Benetti partners with the most renowned names in the nautical design industry, including Sinot Yacht Architecture and Design, Bonetti/Kozerski Architecture, Cassetta Yacht Designers and Lazzarini Pickering Architetti. In response to the latest design trends, Benetti developed the Oasis category with the UK design firm RWD. The key to Oasis's charm is her spectacular Oasis Deck.® This versatile area is the heart and soul of the yacht and is ideal for water-sports activities, leisurely relaxation or waterside entertaining.

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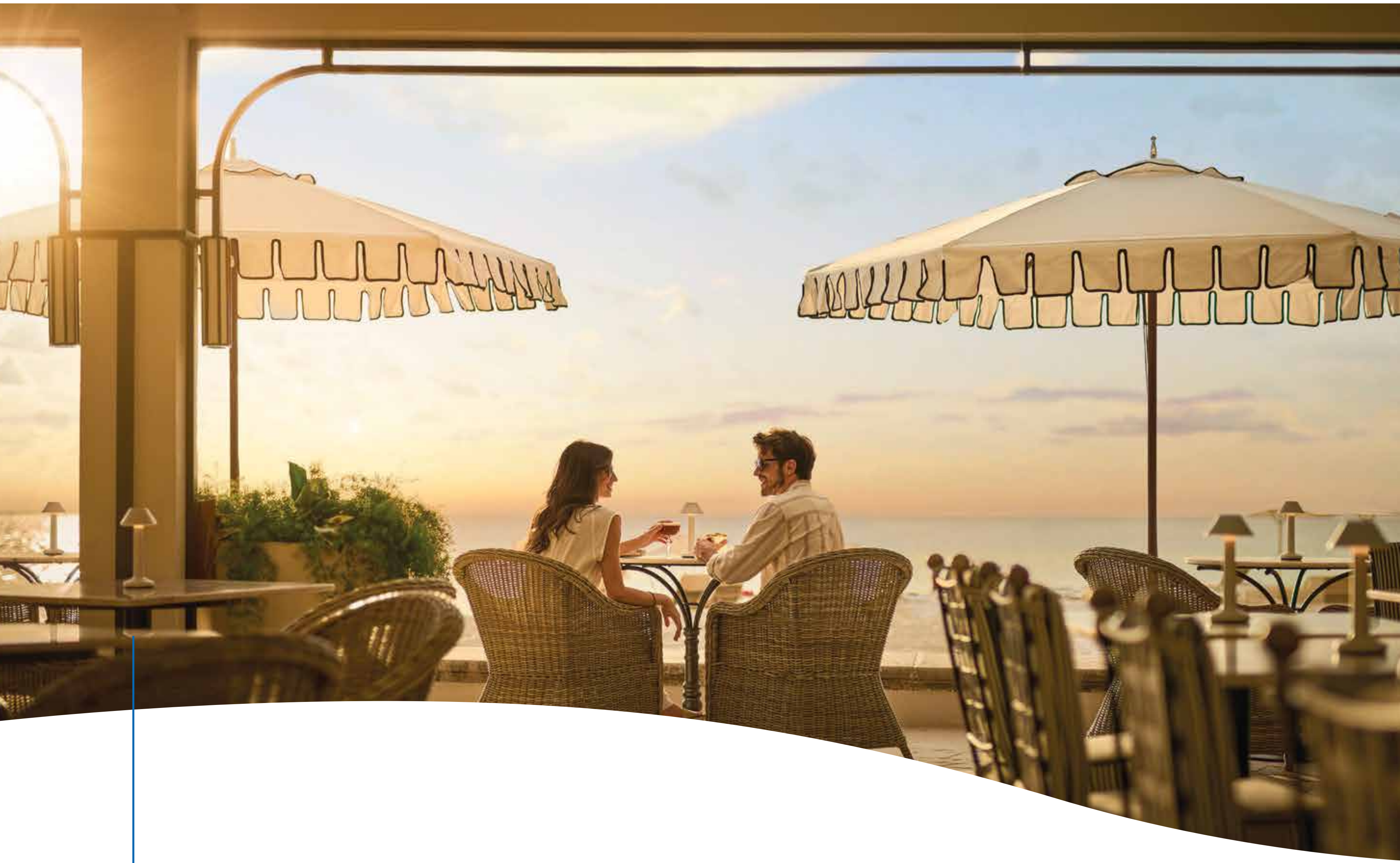

The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman

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Immerse yourself in luxury inspired by the Cayman Islands' diversity and the rich heritage of this sun-filled Caribbean haven. After a grand beautification project in 2021—thoughtfully influenced by the islands' history, culture and environment—the iconic luxury resort in Grand Cayman has been transformed with spaces that enliven the senses and create profound experiences and cherished memories.

The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman is a Forbes five-star hotel and occupies 144 beautifully manicured acres that stretch from the sparkling waters of North Sound to the white sands of the world-famous Seven Mile Beach. An elegant spa offers a signature collection of revitalizing and relaxing treatments, while six dining venues present guests with a diverse array of epicurean delights, including the Caribbean's only AAA Five Diamond restaurant, Blue by Eric Ripert. Another new restaurant, Saint June, is located steps from the sand and features panoramic ocean views and a casual al fresco atmosphere with cocktails and light fare. In addition to a spectacular Greg Norman-designed nine-hole golf course, the resort offers golf enthusiasts a state-of-the-art indoor simulator using TrackMan technology. The resort's Golf Club also includes a pro shop, tournament conditioning, customized instruction and equipment rental.

Each year, the resort and Chef Eric Ripert welcome some of the world's finest chefs and most discerning guests to the Cayman Cookout. The annual event brings together some of the world's most talented chefs and wine and spirits experts for a roster of exciting events.

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Custom Line

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Designed entirely in aluminum, the Custom Line Navetta 50 boasts four decks, with a displacement hull under 500 GT, a length of 49.9 meters and a beam of 9.6 meters. The yacht's distinctive layout positions the master suite in the bow on the upper deck, and all the onboard spaces develop from there. The master suite is surrounded by floor-to-ceiling windows that offer a 180-degree view and provide direct access to a large private terrace in the bow, complete with a sunset solarium. The interconnection between interior and exterior space is, in fact, the other distinctive feature of the Custom Line Navetta 50, replicated in the guest areas and particularly in the lounges on the main and upper decks. The immense floor-to-ceiling windows and reflective surfaces give ocean goers the sensation of being on an island surrounded by water as far as the eye can see.

BARCELONA BOUND

The Mercado del la Boqueria is a must-see, but did you know that there's a private gastronomic space within it? El Altar offers Ramblas views and a paella to write home about. Ingredients are sourced from the neighboring market, and you can even lend a hand in the kitchen.

COURTESY OF PAT SAKELLARI

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Manolo Valdés - Mariposas, 2017
Courtesy of Contini Art Gallery

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IMAGE COURTESY OF MAREA RESTAURANT

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IMAGE COURTESY OF ROCKS GROUP

FRONT ROW IN FRANCE

Who could resist Gillardeau oysters, condiments, and champagne at La Mère Germaine in Villefranche-sur-Mer. Take a table at the water's edge on a sunny day and follow the shellfish appetizer with an epic bouillabaisse, one of the best in the region.

La vie est belle.

IMAGE COURTESY OF PAT SAKELLARI

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Azimut Grande Trideck

The very essence of innovation, Azimut Yachts' first-ever Trideck defies the accepted norms of boat design to create extraordinary spaces that redefine the concept of onboard living. Featuring a new living area, the Sea View Terrace has never been seen before on a yacht this size. This aft-raised "mezzanine" deck is the latest addition to the traditional triple-decker.

Ocean Alexander 35R

The Ocean Alexander 35R motor yacht is the culmination of the renowned Revolution series designed by Evan K. Marshall and Arrabito Naval Architects. With unwavering safety, luxurious spaces and breathtaking views, this is an engineering masterpiece that glides into a slip with ease.

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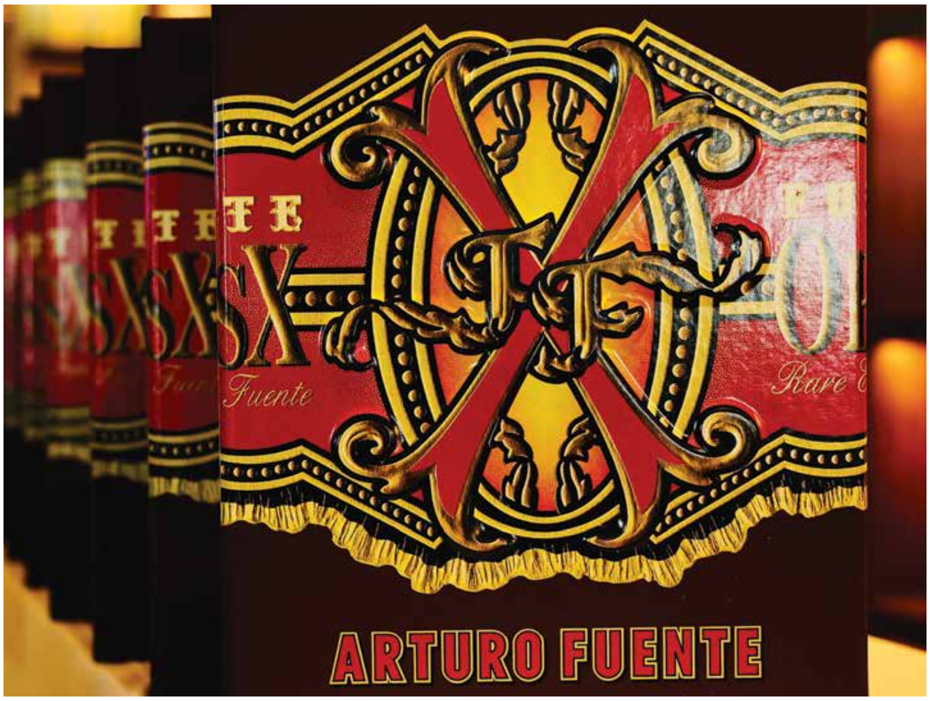

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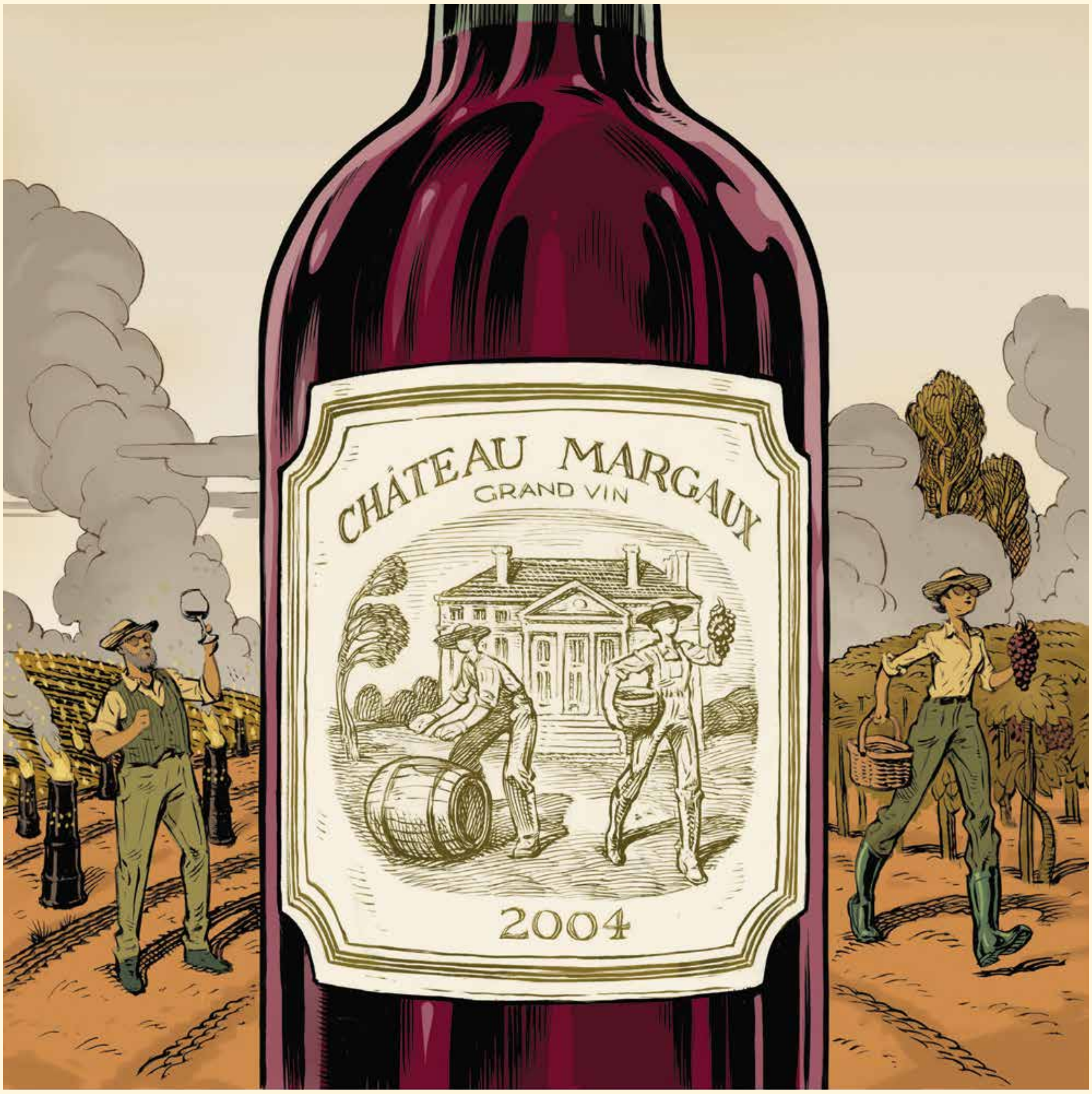
CHÂTEAU MARGAUX
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2004

By Brian Freedman

Changing Times, Changing Vines

WINE As heat waves and biting frost cause havoc and alter the oenological maps, the author offers advice for collectors navigating this new world.

ILLUSTRATION BY
LARS LEETARU

In April of 2021, oddly beautiful images of vineyards in France, the rows illuminated by fire pots, bounced around the internet. From Chablis to the Jura and beyond, the mercury unseasonably plunged, frost moved in and widespread damage to vines threatened the vintage before it had even begun. Those fire pots were an attempt to heat the air surrounding the vines and prevent ice from forming and hardening.

As a Texan wine producer told me, the problem is not so much global warming as it is global *weirding*.

She couldn't have been more right. In October of 2022, my first book, *Crushed: How a Changing Climate Is Altering the Way We Drink*, was published. It explores how climate change—that global weirding—is impacting not just wines and spirits but also the livelihoods of the people who grow the grapes and grains, craft the wines and distill the spirits.

For wine collectors, climate change presents plenty of problems but also opportunities. To guide you through this weird new world, I've devised three strategies to help you navigate a dramatically shifting landscape.

Don't Get Caught Up in the Hype

In 2003, an extreme heatwave hit France and its neighbors, resulting in a vintage of extreme ripeness, particularly in Bordeaux, with wines that, even early on, were generally opulent, powerful and dramatic.

Most critics, at least on the American side of the Atlantic, lauded the wine's decadence and generosity. Demand was high, and many ordinary collectors were priced out of the market. The following year was a return to the norm, with Left Bank reds that were particularly classic—savory, subtle and quieter but no less enjoyable. Coming on the heels of the blockbuster 2003, however, demand was generally lower, and buyers could be forgiven for assuming that these were somehow "lesser" wines.

As a young collector, I couldn't afford the 2003s, but many of the '04s were within reach—so I bought them. Fast-forward 20 years, and those '04s are giving me more pleasure than I ever could have imagined: They are terroir-specific and elegant and have taken on haunting undercurrents of spice and earth. Many of the '03s are delicious—a recently opened bottle of 2003 Château Lagrange was stellar, though that one was harvested on the early side—and have evolved beautifully, but the "quality to price ratio" (QPR), it turns out, was very much in favor of the 2004s.

The lesson is clear: Don't buy into the hype machine and maintain a collection that includes a range of vintages and wine styles. You never know what will turn out to be a real gem in a decade or three.

As climate change picks up steam, the map of the wine world is bound to be revised. In fact, it's happening now.

Stay Open to New and Upcoming Regions and Grape Varieties

As climate change picks up steam, the map of the wine world is bound to be revised. In fact, it's happening now. Sure, Napa Valley is still home to world-class Cabernet Sauvignon, and Bordeaux is the source of benchmark blends, but if you look beneath the surface even in those regions, the ground is already shifting.

In Napa Valley, for example, wildfires have altered the calculus of what happens, and when, each year. If the fires are violent enough toward the end of the growing season, then harvesting decisions are just as likely to be based on when the fruit can be safely brought in devoid of smoke taint as they are on perfect phenolic and sugar ripeness. And whereas a generation or two ago it was the warmer valley-floor parcels that were the most lauded, today there's an increasing focus on mountain and hillside sites: Altitude brings cooler temperatures, which often means longer hang time and therefore greater complexity.

In Bordeaux, the Big Five grape varieties—Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Malbec—are now legally allowed to be joined by a handful of more warm-weather-resistant grapes for wines labeled as Bordeaux AOC and Bordeaux Superieur. They're not yet approved for use in the more prestigious appellations, but that day may come.

Yet a changing climate is also bringing to our attention parts of the wine world that until now had been largely overlooked. The sparkling wines of south and southeastern England are wildly exciting, leveraging the inherently favorable terroir with warming temperatures to ripen grapes in a way that would have been unimaginable 25 years ago. And Israel, which has been producing reds and whites for over 5,000 years, is one of the most compelling wine-producing countries in the world right now, home to a passionately forward-thinking community of grape growers and winemakers and a stunning range of terroirs—from the Mediterranean in the west to the mountains in the east, with deserts, forests and more dotting the landscape in between—which is all resulting in bottles that are ready for the global stage.

Thrilling wines are being produced farther south in Patagonia and farther north in Europe than ever before. Shrewd collectors will take advantage of this, building cellars of not just classic regions but up-and-comers, too.

Support Producers Who Are Doing the Right Thing

People can argue about the causes of climate change all they want, but the men and women who grow the grapes and make the wine don't have the luxury of getting drawn into that debate: They're living with the very real impacts of it every vintage. Many of the wine professionals I spoke to while reporting and writing *Crushed* told me that the vineyards that are farmed sustainably, organically or biodynamically are the ones that seem to be able to best withstand the increasingly dangerous effects of climate change. The generally deeper root systems of vines that are grown on land that is worked in an environmentally respectful manner are more resilient, it seems. And vineyards that are subjected to fewer chemical treatments are healthier for the people who work there, exposing them to fewer potentially toxic substances.

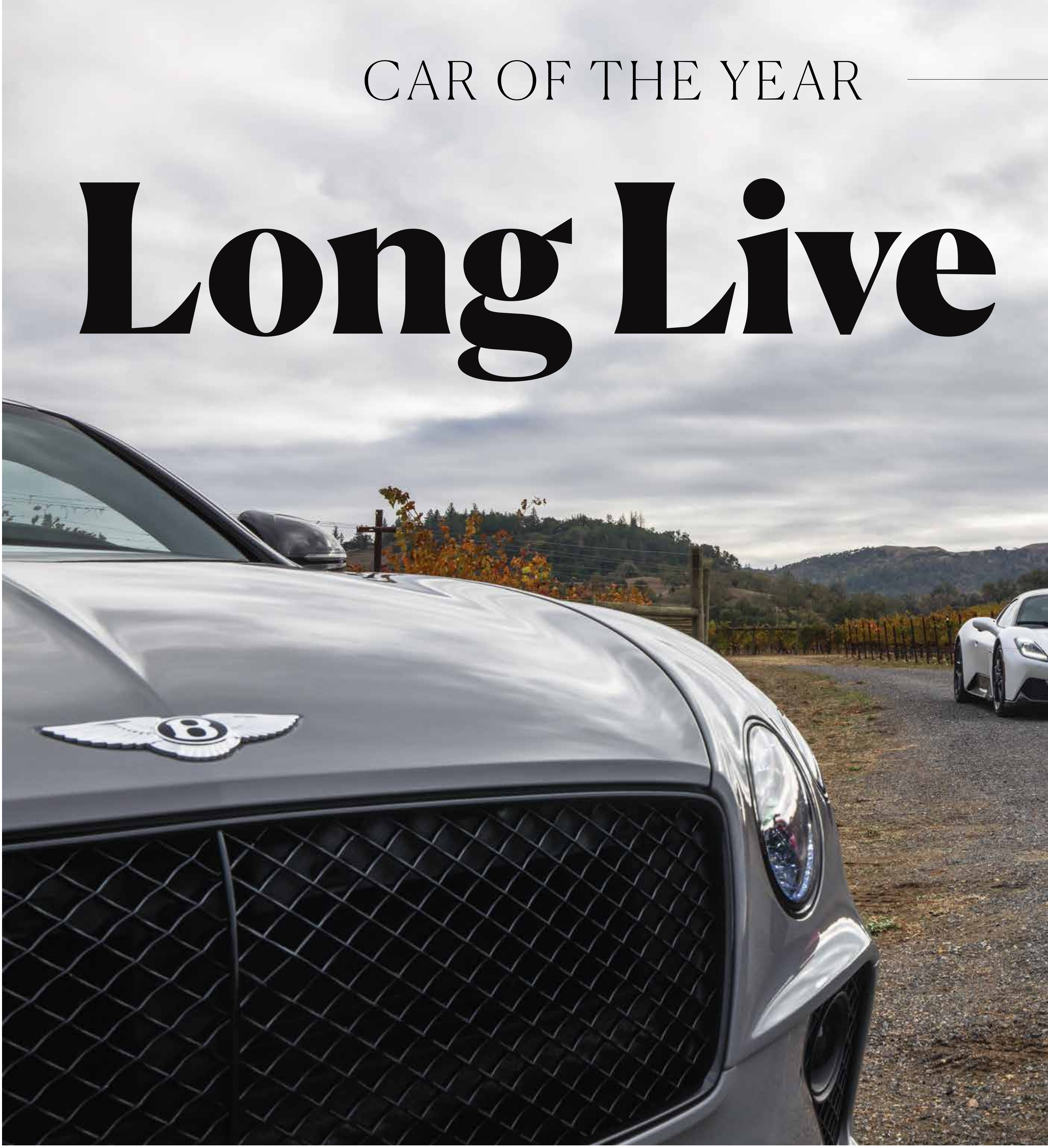
Plus, the wines grown in these vineyards simply reflect the land in a more accurate way. Wine, in my opinion, is the single greatest lens through which to understand a particular patch of the planet. This is why collectors clamor for bottles from different parts of the world, or from specific parts of particular countries or regions, even if they're made from the same grape varieties: A Pinot Noir, for example, that's grown in one region will taste different from one that's come from another. In Burgundy, the contrast is even more dramatic, and the stylistic differences between two neighboring vineyards have, in many cases, been understood for the better part of a millennium. The fewer synthetic herbicides, pesticides and the rest that are dumped into those vineyards, the more the resulting wines will express the essence of that land.

In the end, supporting producers who work in an environmentally responsible manner is better for the earth, better for the people who work it and better for the liquid in the bottle. And that can be only good for all of us. ●

Brian Freedman writes about wine, spirits, travel and food. In addition to being the author of Crushed, *he's a frequent event host and speaker.*

CAR OF THE YEAR

Long Live



20TH ANNIVERSARY

the Kings

Lamborghini
RR1

Two decades in, our annual extravaganza has grown to 176 judges on two coasts, with electric vehicles now gaining ground on the combustion-powered performance cars that have long held sway. But one thing hasn't changed: the fierce competition for the crown.

BY **ROBERT ROSS** AND **VIJU MATHEW** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ROBB RICE**

Twenty Years of "Just Wait Till You Drive *That*"

***Robb Report*'s editors** never could have imagined that what began as a casual gathering of a few pals and fun cars would grow into an internationally recognized automotive competition, held on two coasts and attended annually by hundreds of car enthusiasts over the course of several weeks—but here we are. *Robb Report* Car of the Year started 20 years ago with modest ambitions and nary a thought that it would develop into not just an eagerly anticipated date on our editorial calendar but also a storied tradition. Yet word got out, and just one year after the event's inception, things got serious. The pool of competitors expanded, our circle of judges widened, and car manufacturers took notice. Plus, we soon learned that evaluating 10 or more very different vehicles in one fell swoop was a challenging task, as many drivers not only compared them to one another but also considered their own personal experience in superlative and collection-worthy models spanning eras. Looking back at the well-over 200 sports and luxury cars that have been part of our Car of the Year program shows us that we were fortunate enough, on more than a few occasions, to have driven history in the making.

We've experienced such game-changing approaches to the automobile as the Bugatti Veyron and the Porsche 918 Spyder, as well as cars that have become undisputed classics, including the Ferrari 575M Maranello and the Mercedes-SLS AMG Gullwing. More

recently, we've watched the ebbs and flows of the industry's EV sea change in real time, as electric technology ushers in a radical new generation of vehicles undreamt of around the turn of the millennium. This past fall, on the road in Napa Valley, Calif., and on the track in Boca Raton, Fla., four of our contenders were EVs, and we won't be surprised if next year more than half the entrants are powered in part (or entirely) by spinning motors.

This year still enjoyed a ferocious soundtrack from a slew of fire-breathing internal-combustion-powered models, including the naturally aspirated, V-10-engined Lamborghini Huracán Tecnica. Unfortunately for the Tecnica, fate intervened, and through no fault of its own, the perennial contender—Lamborghini has claimed top honors four times in the past five years, three of them going to Huracán variants—suffered a debilitating incident early on that, like Neymar in the World Cup, ended its contest prematurely.

But however the chips may fall, the philosophy underpinning Car of the Year has remained true to the original mission outlined two decades ago: Identify the vehicle that exceeds its design brief, giving a glimpse of the future while shocking and awing along the way. Of course, the competition wouldn't hold quite the allure it does without the exceptional hospitality, wine, cuisine and other luxury amenities that accompany the world's best automobiles. Perhaps that's the great secret behind the longevity of our Car of the Year program: As with the machines themselves, there's always a new discovery to be made.

SRT

Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye Widebody Jailbreak

The full Challenger SRT name doesn't exactly say it all, but it says a lot, showing just how hard Dodge is riding out the last glory days of gas-powered, retro-inspired American muscle. After announcing plans to reimagine the Challenger and Charger models for the brand's upcoming transition to electrified power, Dodge seems hellbent on making sure everyone within hearing distance of this car's rip-snorting, supercharged Hemi V-8 with 807 hp will never forget what we gave up in the battery-power bargain.

Many judges admitted that the Dodge was their guilty pleasure out of our field. Jon Robinson called the car "the bad boy of the group, but so fun to drive," and Mike Sisk observed that "you can't help but smile behind the wheel." For Ken Parr, it was "ridiculously fun, but juvenile—this is a bachelor party with a steering wheel." Others found the Dodge too overpowering for their taste. "This car is extreme, like a double Long Island iced tea," said Josh Green. "No thanks." Jonathan Weizman, meanwhile, "couldn't wait to get out." Some were more forgiving, with Kenneth Woolcott saying that it was "the last of the breed, for better or worse," and Karen Karlsrud referring to it as "the right car for a special few."

> "The bad boy of the group, but so fun to drive."

Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye Widebody Jailbreak

ENGINE:
6.2-liter supercharged V-8
POWER:
807 hp @ 6,400 rpm
0-60 MPH:
3.4 sec
TOP SPEED:
203 mph
BASE PRICE:
$63,530
AS TESTED:
$97,072

DODGE
Robb Report

“A

BMW i7 xDrive60

plush and luxurious electric tank.”

With its electrified 7 Series, BMW throws down the gauntlet in a claim for EV world domination. Yet some BMW diehards might feel that dual electric motors and a one-speed automatic transmission turn the Ultimate Driving Machine into the Ultimate Sewing Machine. No car this year elicited so many polarized opinions from our judges as this nearly 6,000-pound cruiser.

Certainly, the vehicle’s advanced technology offers impressive convenience and luxury, transforming the cabin into a rolling executive lounge. Some judges connected to the maximalist vibe, including Keith Berglund, who “very much enjoyed the interior styling, the room, handling and classic look,” while also noting “it’s a little slow compared to the Audi.” Rick Westbrook mostly seconded that assessment. “It’s a great car for a long drive if you can find a charging station on your route,” he said, adding, “It’s a little busy on the interior, but still beautiful.” That busyness, however, raised more than a few of our judges’ hackles. Remarking on the fake crystal gewgaws festooning the center console and door panels, Honor Guthrie quipped that “Bavarian Motor Works becomes Baccarat Motor Works.” Lindsay Smith agreed, saying, “It definitely tells a story, but the wrong one. The crystal details just seem tacky—out of place in a BMW.”

While some were impressed—Scott Joachim called the i7 “perhaps the most luxurious EV on the market”—one judge, a BMW connoisseur whose collection reflects his commitment to the marque, was not convinced. “I’ve been a BMW fan since childhood,” said Charles Thomas. “If this is the future of the brand, they should simply close up shop now and allow brands that have stayed true to themselves to fill their place in the market.” Jonathan Weizman may have described the divisive model’s appeal most succinctly when he called it “a plush and luxurious electric tank.”

BMW i7 xDrive60
MOTORS:
Dual electric
POWER:
536 hp
0-60 MPH:
4.5 sec
TOP SPEED:
149 mph (limited)
RANGE:
318 mi
BASE PRICE:
$119,300
AS TESTED:
$156,595

Rolls-Royce
Phantom Series II

Rolls-Royce Phantom Series II
ENGINE:
6.75-liter twin-turbocharged V-12
POWER:
563 hp @ 5,000 rpm
0-60 MPH:
5.3 sec
TOP SPEED:
155 mph (limited)
BASE PRICE:
$470,000
AS TESTED:
$651,450

In this British marque's magnum opus, wretched excess never seemed so right, or so rich, coddling its occupants in unbridled luxury complemented by 664 ft lbs of torque from a twin-turbo V-12 engine that simply does not stop building power. If that kind of rush is your catnip, buy a Phantom now, because the specter of an electric Rolls-Royce (which, coincidentally, will be called the Spectre) looms as large as the car itself.

Our judges universally appreciated the opulence, if some were a bit conflicted as to which row of seating was more appropriate for an owner. John Zappettini said, "I absolutely love this automobile, both to drive and be driven in." Kendall Flesher was equally enamored, saying, "I had the biggest smile on my face the entire ride, as driver and passenger. There is no hiccup in its performance, every move is so smooth as to go virtually unnoticed. I could easily spend hours in it." Burton Young agreed, noting, "This car has everything you'd want. The interior compares to a five-star, world-class hotel. The ride is so smooth you can barely tell how fast you're driving." Arvind Sodhani experienced "surprising acceleration for a monster," while calling the Phantom "opulent, overdone and not understated." Lindsay Smith painted a definitive picture of luxury. "I felt like I was sitting in a very plush jewelry box," she said. "It was all things regal, gangster and fabulousness!"

> "The interior compares to a five-star, world-class hotel."

“An elephant on cheetah legs.”

Mercedes-Benz
EQS 580 4MATIC SUV

Take a good, close look at Mercedes-Benz's electric future. We got a taste last year with the EQS sedan, and now it's back in a family size and with even greater utility. A luxury transportation pod as only the Silver Star can imagine one, this is a bleeding-edge EV with a touchscreen bigger than the broad side of a 100-gallon aquarium, flaunting more features and technology than any vehicle this side of the Mars lander. Mercedes calls it the "SUV reinvented and the electric vehicle reimagined." Futuristic but refreshingly familiar, it combines ultramodern tech with a luxurious, family-friendly package and space for seven.

And therein lies the magic. *Robb Report*'s deputy editor, Josh Condon, noted the large SUV's speed, likening it to "an elephant on cheetah legs," but he was most impressed by the way the vehicle melded a futuristic power train and splashy high-tech features with intuitive usability. Explaining why it ranked as his second-place choice for Car of the Year, Condon said: "Tesla is still making EVs for tech early adopters, but this is an overbuilt EV for people who want an electric car that mostly just feels like a car—and the vast majority of car buyers are the latter." Michael Steinger called it "the best all-around car of the bunch. A daily driver with exceptional range, with Mercedes reliability and comfort." And Michael Famiglietti gave it highest marks, asserting, "Mercedes conquers the electric segment of SUVs."

But some others thought it came up short on the wow factor. Paul Kwiecinski said it was "well designed but low on excitement and passion. One of the cars that you use and don't mind selling." Jonathan Weizman was even stingier with his praise: "Neato, but no." Michael Grad took a rather contrarian view, calling it "so perfect in every way that it's actually boring. It almost makes driving feel like a video game." In that case, millennials and Gen Z-ers might feel right at home behind the wheel.

Mercedes-Benz EQS 580 4MATIC SUV

MOTORS:
Dual electric
POWER:
536 hp
0-60 MPH:
4.5 sec
TOP SPEED:
130 mph (limited)
RANGE:
285 miles
BASE PRICE:
$125,950
AS TESTED:
$144,990

Mercedes-AMG SL 63 Roadster

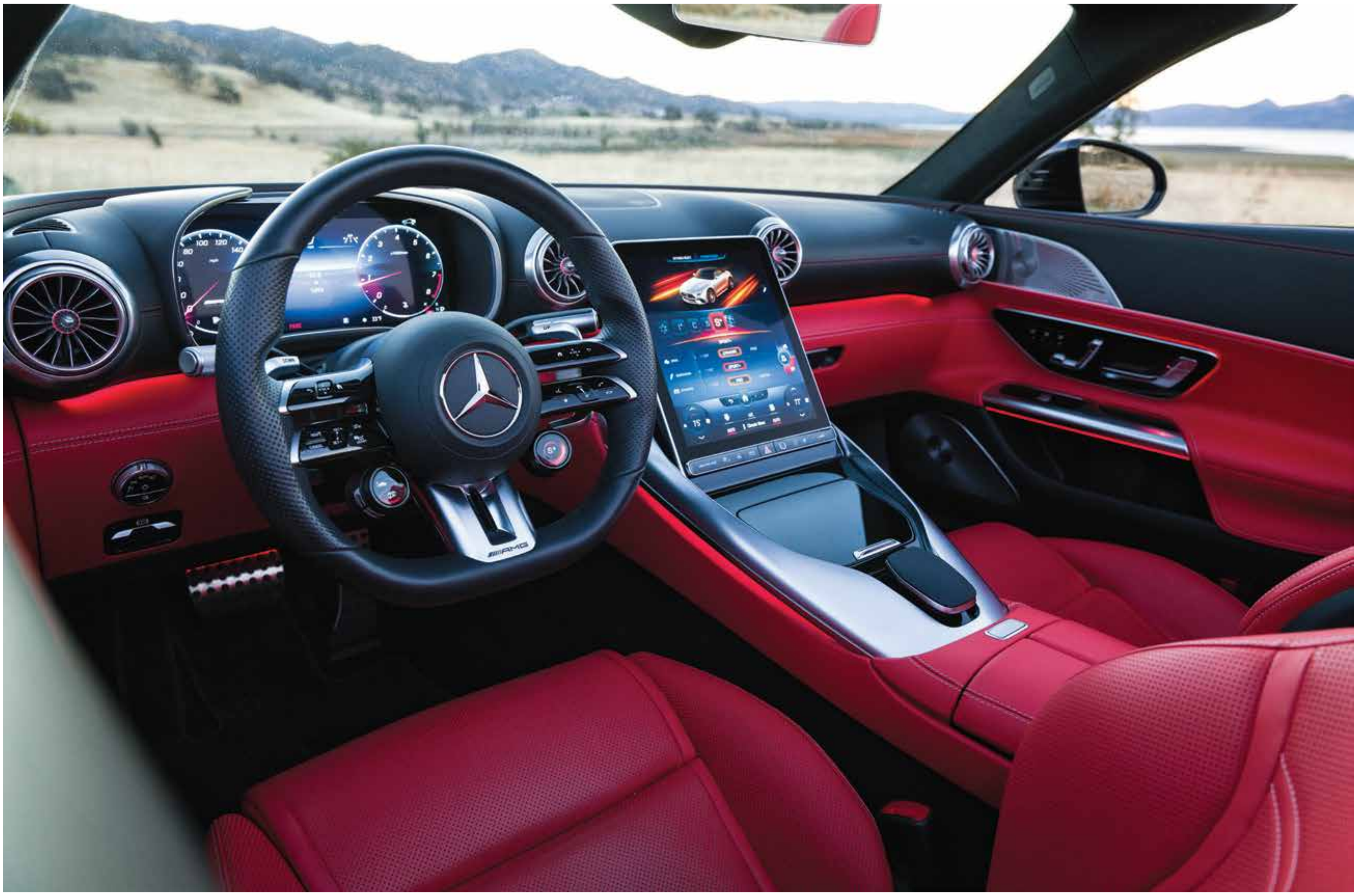
> “Power, control, beauty and comfort, all in one package.”

The popular SL roadster has been a Mercedes-Benz staple since the first 300 SL hit the streets in 1957. And while that car—a genuine blue-chip collectible—is a tough act to follow, the seventh and latest generation keeps the original’s faith and spirit alive. Few other cars meld butter-smooth luxury with top-down performance and make it seem so easy. Sometimes we take for granted that a car can be engaging and charismatic without all the flash and fanfare, but when it’s time to finally grow up, it’s hard to beat Mercedes’s quintessential convertible.

Our snazzy 2+2 (in name only) had lots of admirers, including Merle Mullin, who regularly rallies in her own 300 SL. She said this descendant “handles very well, feeling the connection to the road at every turn. It’s the perfect combination of a sports car with comfort.” Apparently, admiration was in the air. “I loved everything about this car!” exclaimed Linda Young. “The look, speed, comfort, style and performance. I think this car was made for me.” Cindy McMackin felt the same way, saying, “It’s a nearly perfect driving experience. It’s hard to fit the golf clubs in, but otherwise it’s a dream car!” Others found the steering heavy and the interior accoutrements needlessly complicated for a sporting GT, with Craig Cavileer observing that “the iPad is unnecessary and distracting. Let the car be a car and not an auditorium.” Still, complaints were far outweighed by enthusiasm. “I can’t imagine how to make the car better,” Everett Robert said. “It’s power, control, beauty and comfort, all in one package.”

Mercedes-AMG SL 63 Roadster

ENGINE:
4.0-liter twin-turbocharged V-8
POWER:
577 hp @ 5,500 rpm
0-60 MPH:
3.5 sec
TOP SPEED:
196 mph
BASE PRICE:
$178,100
AS TESTED:
$205,550



Audi RS e-tron GT

“What a surprise

Today, platform sharing among car brands is as natural as free love in the ’60s—sometimes it’s hard to discern whether you’re really getting your thrills from Audi, Porsche, Lambo or Bentley. But we *do* know that Audi is raising a righteous crop of cars. It’s a rare automotive marque that can go from era-defining Group B rally champions in the 1980s to building the definitive luxury EV in 2023. Our judges were almost universally impressed, as were our editors, two of whom, Viju Mathew and Robert Ross, voted the Audi in second place. “It delivers inspired handling and real driving emotion—characteristics absent, with the exception of the Porsche Taycan, in other EVs,” said Ross, *Robb Report’s* automotive editor-at-large. “It really pushes the EV promise forward.” Lev Uretsky agreed. “This is the only EV I’ve driven that felt inspiringly sporty,” he said. “Every EV is fantastic in a straight line—this one is fantastic in the corners.”

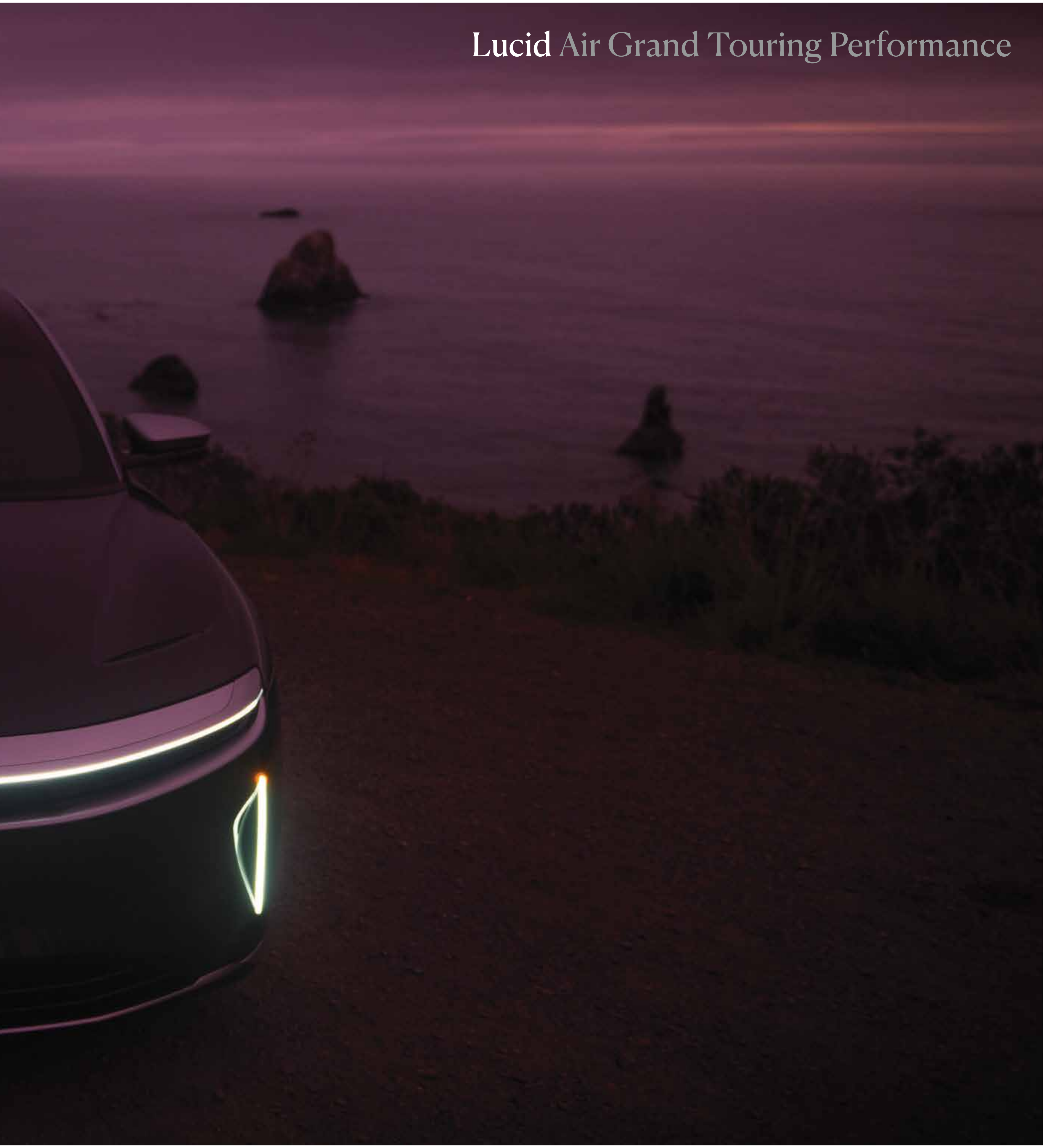
Kendall Flesher declared, “This was by far my favorite car of the group. Audi exceeded my expectations of what an electric vehicle can be. I’ll be trading in my Aston Martin Vantage for this Audi when I get home.” John Zappettini was similarly smitten, exclaiming, “What a surprise this car is. It’s the first electric car that drives like a car and not a golf cart. Audi nailed it.” That observation rang true among so many drivers who thought that this German slingshot exemplified the potential—and promise—of the automobile’s electric future. Ruben Oliva called it “a true Audi, an understated design that’s beautiful in its simplicity. The performance is impressive, while retaining a sense of elegance and refined manners. It’s an all-around great sports car.” (We couldn’t agree more.) Daniel Hirschhorn spoke for many drivers who are uneasy in the passenger seat, saying, “I was pleasantly surprised by the acceleration. When my wife drove it, I was *terrified* by the acceleration.”

Audi RS e-tron GT

MOTORS:
Dual electric
POWER:
637 hp in boost mode
0-60 MPH:
3.1 sec in boost mode
TOP SPEED:
155 mph (limited)
RANGE:
232 mi
BASE PRICE:
$143,900
AS TESTED:
$161,890

this car is."

LUCID



Lucid Air Grand Touring Performance

The 1,050 hp Lucid Air Grand Touring Performance was the vehicle many judges were most curious about, especially since the only model to ever compete for Car of the Year with greater output was the 1,200 hp Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Grand Sport Vitesse, in 2013.

"Mind-scrambling acceleration," is how Julio Cantillo described the sensation of putting the throttle to the floor, while Joshua Greenman referred to it as "insane," the same word used by Nelson Calle to describe the Lucid's handling prowess. But Hugi Hilmisson thought that "the chassis and brakes felt unprepared for the nuke that powers the wheels," and Mark Newman failed to connect with it on a higher level, saying that it had "1,000 hp and no soul."

Yet many drivers concluded it was a paradigm shift, voting the car into the judges' third-place slot; it was hampered, however, by not ranking in the editorial team's top three and ultimately missed the overall podium. Still, Tim Wentworth called Lucid's Air Grand Touring Performance "the first electric car that could actually make a believer out of me," while Mark Singer was taken by the styling: "With current electric cars looking like a sea of blue suits in an office tower, the Lucid stands out for its artful lines and futuristic look." Peter Li and Ken Parr summed up the fans' consensus by calling the Lucid, respectively, the "best EV so far" and "a beautiful example of automotive progress."

“A beautiful example of automotive progress.”

Lucid Air Grand Touring Performance

MOTORS:
Dual electric
POWER:
1,050 hp
0-60 MPH:
2.6 sec
TOP SPEED:
168 mph
RANGE:
446 mi
BASE PRICE:
$179,000
AS TESTED:
$179,000

LUCID
GRAND TOURING
Air

3

Maserati MC20

“Remarkable—the most pure and elemental car Maserati has made in eons.”

Maserati MC20

ENGINE:
3.0-liter twin-turbocharged V-6
POWER:
621 hp @ 7,500 rpm
0-60 MPH:
2.9 sec
TOP SPEED:
202 mph
BASE PRICE:
$212,000
AS TESTED:
$315,550

Maserati was once a revered name in Italian sports cars—it predates Ferrari by a quarter century—but it lost some luster in recent years thanks to a turn down-market and the subsequent compromises in design, craftsmanship and performance that decision necessitated. Which is why the MC20 is such a make-or-break model for the Italian marque: It's a chance to re-establish what the brand stands for, and what it's capable of, at a critical juncture. A 202 mph, $200,000-plus halo sports car is Maserati playing for the highest stakes—and going all-in.

Robb Report's editorial team considered it a resounding success, naming it their unanimous choice for Car of the Year. While the judges didn't rate the Maserati as highly, its first-place editorial finish was enough to boost it onto the winners' podium in third place overall, displacing the judges' bronze-medal pick, the Lucid Air Grand Touring Performance.

Robb Report's Josh Condon and Robert Ross were equally smitten. Condon found the MC20 "completely charming," adding, "the balance was remarkable and it had that lovely Italian sports-car steering that turns every road into a clifftop two-lane hugging the Amalfi Coast." Ross was even more effusive, deeming it "remarkable—the most pure and elemental car Maserati has made in eons."

The MC20 garnered fans among the other judges, as well. "This is the Maserati we've all been waiting for," said Ruben Oliva. "And the handling is track-car level." Lee Oleinick was equally impressed, admiring its "incredible handling, wonderful power and amazing sound." As for looks: "Maserati sculpted a masterpiece."

In the contrarian camp, Brent Bellotte referred to it as a "swing and a miss," while William Moler summed up his enthusiasm level as, simply, "Meh." But Linda Young zeroed in on its specific appeal, saying, "It's not for everyone—you have to be a race-car driver to love this car." She may have been onto something. A former Indy 500 winner (who asked to remain anonymous, considering sponsorship obligations) weighed in after his drive by saying, "the brakes are amazing and the weight distribution is very well done. Wow, what a car." Our thoughts exactly.

2

Aston Martin DBX707

The history of Aston Martin has as many ups, downs, twists and turns as Germany's famed Nürburgring circuit. The newest curve? Just how thoroughly the posh British automaker has delivered a dart to the bull's-eye of elite SUVs with its nearly 700 hp DBX707. It was the only vehicle that ranked on the podium for both judges and editors—the model placed third on the editorial team's list and second on the judges' scorecard—and not since the Lamborghini Urus, named *Robb Report*'s 2019 Car of the Year, has a vehicle in this category so enthralled drivers.

"Awesome in every respect," said Stephen Couig. "Heavenly growl with endless acceleration followed by hard-gripping brakes, and the handling is best in class." In Ezra Henson's estimation, it "over-delivered on acceleration, handling and driving experience," while Julian Cantillo said, "If you blindfolded me, I'd think I was in a sports car with how it handled," adding that "the engine had a beautiful sound and tons of grunt to boot." To Burton Young, the DBX707 "has the feel of a DB11—you're just sitting higher."

Young was also impressed by the cargo space, noting, “you can fit at least four sets of golf clubs, comfortably.” After considering the entire field, including the 807 hp Dodge Challenger Hellcat variant, *Robb Report*’s Josh Condon called the DBX707 “easily the wildest car in the bunch.”

Among the naysayers, Tommy Duncan likened the car to a lot of Hollywood wannabes: “beautiful but missing the ‘It’ factor.” The colorful and heavily bolstered interior was nonetheless “anticlimactic,” according to Heather Murphy, and Bogi Palsson thought that the DBX707 was “too little, too late to compete in the segment.” Those sentiments, though, were few and far between, as most judges fell in line with *Robb Report*’s Viju Mathew, who said, “This isn’t a bull in a china shop, it’s a bull that *owns* the china shop—brute strength and refinement incarnate.” But perhaps Stuart Winston expressed the unbridled joy and irreverence of this most interesting Aston best with his matter-of-fact assessment: “Love this car, it makes me happy.”

> “The engine had a beautiful sound and tons of grunt to boot.”

Aston Martin DBX707

ENGINE:
4.0-liter twin-turbocharged V-8
POWER:
697 hp @ 6,000 rpm
0-60 MPH:
3.1 sec
TOP SPEED:
193 mph
BASE PRICE:
$236,000
AS TESTED:
$292,586

ASTON MARTIN
RR1

UK
T44 BML

1

Bentley
Continental GT S

Bentley Continental GT S / GTC S

ENGINE:
4.0-liter twin-turbocharged V-8
POWER:
542 hp @ 6,000 rpm
0-60 MPH:
3.9 sec / 4.0 sec
TOP SPEED:
198 mph
BASE PRICE:
$266,000 / $292,500
AS TESTED:
$318,290 / $333,795

“You can drive it every day—and everywhere—and never be bored.”

Robb Report
BENTLEY

For all who are passionate about cars and the driving experience, this is a time of mixed emotions. There's excitement about the innovation coming full throttle down the pike, but separation anxiety at the thought of mass-production internal-combustion engines going the way of the northern white rhino. Perhaps that's why, out of a diverse field of competitors that mirrors the semi-electrified state of the industry, our winner reflects the enduring preference among enthusiasts for conventional power plants, regardless of cylinder count, and recognition that this may be one of the last opportunities to vote for one. That message came through loud and clear with the selection of the V-8-powered Bentley Continental GT S as *Robb Report*'s 2023 Car of the Year.

This is the second year in a row the British marque has claimed the title with a Continental variant, and based on the judges' reactions, it's not hard to see why. "Bentley has proved that a large car can be made to handle like a go-kart," said Ruben Oliva. "This is a Bentley that cannot be overlooked, cannot be overstated in its utter excellence." Others were just as taken. Eric Edidin noted, "There's a sense of occasion driving this car. It feels special and makes you feel special." Jeremy Mancheski likened it to "a tuxedo with track shoes," while Matt Schiefferly called the driving experience "grand touring at its finest."

The reader-judges may have been captivated, but the Continental GT S and GTC S convertible (for the Florida sessions) didn't make the editorial team's top three. "Although this vehicle is exquisite aesthetically, there were a few others that I felt were more consequential," said automotive editor Viju Mathew. Automotive editor-at-large Robert Ross preferred its sibling, saying "the W-12-powered Continental is so superlative, the V-8 iteration pales in comparison."

The judges disagreed—heartily. "This car is still king of the hill," said Mark Newman. "It has looks, power and comfort," adding that "you can drive it every day—and everywhere—and never be bored." The highest praise, though, was given by Thomas Murphy, who called it the "best car I've ever driven." As far as superlatives go, "best" is hard to top. And, for the second year running, it's the most fitting term for Bentley's refined-yet-robust grand tourer.

Greatest Hits (and Misses)

Not all champions are created equal. A look back at 20 years' worth of winners reveals classics both instant and eventual, as well as a few questionable calls.

2003 | Mercedes-Benz SL55 AMG

SPECS: 493 hp | 155 mph top speed | 14 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $113,915
VALUE TODAY: ▼ $26,200 to $38,600[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "The excitement and the feel of that exhaust system tuned with that motor—it was a cross between Mozart and Frank Zappa."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: Today, our 2003 champion is just an old used car, while the Ferrari 575M, which lost out to the Merc, is an appreciating classic.

2007 | Bentley Continental GTC

SPECS: 552 hp | 195 mph top speed | 13 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $190,000
VALUE TODAY: ▼ $49,900 to $62,000[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "The design is clean, pure and well executed. No one else has come close to what Bentley has accomplished in the 21st century."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: Another worthy Continental, but the $1.34 million, 1,001 hp Bugatti Veyron 16.4 came in fourth place that year. What, apart from tires, were we smoking?

2008 | Audi R8

SPECS: 420 hp | 187 mph top speed | 15 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $112,095
VALUE TODAY: ▼ $78,200 to $96,100[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "Hop behind the race-ready steering wheel, snick the gated lever into first, and suddenly you are a budding Lewis Hamilton."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: Audi's R8 halo car changed the perception of the marque's performance, from a rally specialist to the maker of a bona fide supercar.

2009 | Lamborghini Gallardo LP560-4

SPECS: 552 hp | 203 mph top speed | 16 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $202,100
VALUE TODAY: ▼ $119,000 to $147,000[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "I was there in the '70s and '80s when these raging bulls were best positioned alongside sick cows. Yet, today's Lambos are all better, and the Gallardo LP560-4 is assuredly the best."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: The V-10 "baby" Lambo reset drivers' expectations, showing that V-12s aren't always better.

2013 | Porsche 911 Carrera S

SPECS: 400 hp | 188 mph top speed | 20 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $96,000 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▼ $70,413[3]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "Longer, wider and lower than any previous 911, but also more powerful, quicker, faster, better handling and a whole lot more luxurious."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: Porsche's 911 Carrera S outperformed cars priced massively higher back then, and its cost-benefit analysis has only improved with the current 992 platform's updated output and gearing.

2014 | Ferrari F12 Berlinetta

SPECS: 731 hp | 211 mph top speed | 13 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $316,000 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▼ $239,596[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "Most agreed that the F12 has it all: Power, luxury, surgical response and a shape that is seductive yet subtle for the brand."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: The design of the front-engined grand tourer is as fresh as if it debuted today, and the architecture provided the template for the current 812 Superfast, the most powerful production V-12 Ferrari ever.

2015 | Porsche 918 Spyder

SPECS: 887 hp | 214 mph top speed | 67/22 mpg (electric/gas)
PRICE WHEN NEW: $845,000 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▲ $1.49 million[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "Its performance is eye-watering, soul-shattering, mind-bending and, as some judges concluded, totally awesome."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: This herculean hybrid has only gained in stature as one of Porsche's great innovations—and as a blue-chip investment.

2005: NICK DIMBLEBY; 2009: BARRY HATHAWAY; 2012: CORDERO STUDIOS

KEY: 1 Hagerty valuation, good-to-excellent condition **2** Kelley Blue Book Typical Listing Price **3** Kelley Blue Book Fair Purchase Price

2004 | Bentley Continental GT

SPECS: 552 hp | 198 mph top speed | 12 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $149,000
VALUE TODAY: ▼ $26,500 to $38,000[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "In accordance with W.O. Bentley's decree, this GT is most certainly an adventure in exhilarating power, elegance, grace and distinction."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: A pivotal design that ensured the future of Bentley. Ferocious then, and a model that's still garnering COTY honors 19 years later.

2005 | Aston Martin DB9

SPECS: 450 hp | 186 mph top speed | 13 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $155,000
VALUE TODAY: ▼ $42,600 to $50,700[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "In the gran turismo tradition, it has the distinction of being the shapeliest Aston since the DB5. The DB9 is truly a future classic."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: We weren't wrong. Henrik Fisker's design remains arguably the most alluring Aston Martin of this century.

2006 | Ferrari F430 Spider

SPECS: 483 hp | 193 mph top speed | 13 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $199,000
VALUE TODAY: ▼ $160,000 to $179,000[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "Never has Ferrari created so accessible a car, one that is as easy to drive as it is to drool over."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: Today, the F430 is the in-between Ferrari—the 360 Modena looks better, and the 458 *is* better.

*2010** | Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG

SPECS: 563 hp | 197 mph top speed | 16 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $200,000 (est.)
VALUE TODAY: ▲ $239,000 to $270,000[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "Hands down the best Mercedes-Benz to leave the factory since, well, the original 300 SL Gullwing."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: The SLS has gone on to become a genuine collectible that can still keep pace with today's supercars.

2011 | Ferrari 458 Italia

SPECS: 562 hp | 202 mph top speed | 14 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $230,000
VALUE TODAY: ▲ $219,000 to $284,000[1]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "All things magnificent from Italian culture, from Michelangelo's *Pietà* to a 1945 Brunello di Montalcino, bow before a Ferrari."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: No one knew at the time just how coveted the 458 series, the last Prancing Horse model with a naturally aspirated V-8, would become.

2012 | Lamborghini Aventador LP 700-4

SPECS: 700 hp | 217 mph top speed | 13 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $387,000 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▼ $280,221[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "The most outrageous Lamborghini ever made . . . the Aventador LP 700-4 is a stellar achievement—as a design exercise and as a series-production reality."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: A fitting start to the marque's enduring flagship-model line that repeatedly advanced the naturally aspirated V-12 and further impressed with every iteration.

2016 | Ferrari 488 GTB

SPECS: 661 hp | 205 mph top speed | 18 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $245,400 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▲ $258,935[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "A tantalizing combination of power, handling, sound and style . . . If your heart does not race after getting behind the wheel, you need to check your pulse."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: While the right COTY choice for its time, the 488 GTB has been left in the rearview by the prowess of its more recent manifestation, the F8 Tributo.

2017 | Porsche 911 Turbo S

SPECS: 580 hp | 205 mph top speed | 21 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $188,100 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▼ $148,052[3]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "It is everything a sports car should be, and nothing it shouldn't be."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: This model remains a sui generis driving experience, the automotive equivalent of Leonardo da Vinci painting an improved *Mona Lisa* every year.

2017 | Lamborghini Huracán Spyder

SPECS: 610 hp | 201 mph top speed | 16 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $262,450 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▼ $253,345[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "The brand's best-handling car ever . . . it's like the Aventador's better-behaved brother."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: When you're right, you're right. The Huracán line's winning Car of the Year legacy began here.

---

*Another competitor that year, the Bugatti Veyron 16.4 Grand Sport, so overwhelmed judges that they awarded it an entirely new title: Car of the Decade

2018 | Lamborghini Huracán Performante

SPECS: 640 hp | 201 mph top speed | 17 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $274,390 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▲ $284,157[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "The active aerodynamics elevates driver engagement and confidence to make every curve, every straight-line blast, a laugh-out-loud experience."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: Still unmatched in allowing drivers to push past their comfort zones.

2019 | Lamborghini Urus

SPECS: 650 hp | 190 mph top speed | 14 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $200,000 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▲ $258,514[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "On the outskirts of Bologna, the city where Michelangelo drew inspiration for his later work on the Vatican's Sistine Chapel, Lamborghini has created its own magnum opus, the Urus."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: Other elite automakers are still responding to the gauntlet thrown down by Lamborghini with the Urus.

2020 | Lamborghini Huracán Evo Spyder

SPECS: 631 hp | 202 mph top speed | 15 mpg
PRICE WHEN NEW: $287,400 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▲ $325,639[2]
WHAT WE SAID THEN: "The car predicts your next move and sets you up for success, often despite yourself. And it's all complemented by 10 cylinders of naturally aspirated fury."
WHAT WE SAY NOW: The Evo's super-processor brain remains mind-boggling, and the convertible has yet to find an equally innovative peer.

Crunching Numbers

Our 2023 Car of the Year program consisted of eight sessions, five in California and three in Florida, with 111 participants in the former and 65 in the latter. That amounts to a total of 176 drivers casting their votes for first-, second- and third-place winners. The *Robb Report* automotive team, which includes deputy editor Josh Condon, automotive editor Viju Mathew and automotive editor-at-large Robert Ross, also drove the cars and provided a separate editorial ranking, considering broader factors such as brand impact and market significance. Car of the Year results, like elections, are often surprising, and this edition was no exception, with a couple of EVs hot on the tails of the gas-guzzling performance cars that have long dominated the contest.

Altogether, judging criteria considered the following categories:

Looks: *interior and exterior*
Luxury and Comfort: *ergonomics, materials and noise, vibration and harshness*
Performance: *acceleration, handling and braking*
Utility: *capacity and practicality*
Intangibles: *collectibility and "wow" factor*

When all the votes were tallied, Bentley's remarkable Continental GT—a winner in 2004, 2007 and 2022—took the laurels as the *Robb Report* 2023 Car of the Year. But it was a close race: While the clear frontrunner during both the Napa and the Boca sessions, the Bentley had to contend with another Brit, the ferocious Aston Martin DBX707, which was the only car placed on the podium by both the judges (second place) and editors (third), boosting its final ranking significantly. In the end, it was the Continental's superior vehicle score, for attributes such as luxury, design and collectibility, that put it over the top.

Rounding out the top three was the Maserati MC20, which was hit-or-miss with the judges but unanimously voted atop the editorial podium by the *Robb Report* automotive team, who considered it a significant return to form for Maserati, recalling its best reputation for building elegant, engaging and emotional Italian sports cars.

Partners

Aperture Cellars
Brandlin Estate
Cade
Cohiba
Donelan Family Wines
Far Niente
Glenfiddich
Grgich Hills Estate
Hope Family Wines
Human Longevity
J.Lohr
Kelleher International
Loco Tequila
Lugano Diamonds
Maestro Dobel
Penfolds
Penske Luxury
Seabourn
Stag's Leap
Sullivan Rutherford Estate
The Concours Club
VistaJet

Judges

Andrew Adams
Rodrigo Aguilar
Gina Archer
Tim Archer
Rodrigo Azpurua
Jill Banfield
Steve Bassett
Brent Bellotte
Luigi Beltrami
Keith Berglund
Phil Bortman
Meridith Braun
Dante Buckley
Kevin Buckley
Gerry Byrne
Maurice Byrne
Tommy Cabrerizo
Nelson Calle
Julian Cantillo
Julio Cantillo
Andrew Carton
Roger Cary
Michael Cassedy
Colie Cassidy
Corey Casty
Lee Casty
Craig Cavileer
Jose Cornide
Stephen Couig
Moze Cowper
Jonathan Cutler
Ariane Dart

Ricky DeCastro
Rebecca Delgado
Siobhan Dempsey
Debbi Diggs
James Diggs
Cushing Donelan
Tommy Duncan
Oscar Echemendia
Eric Edidin
Michael Famiglietti
Idit Ferder
Moti Ferder
Federico Ferrante
Kevin Fink
Kendall Flesher
Gian Fulgoni
Jose Garcia
Giancarlo Gasparini
John Gildea
Alicia Goetz
Michael Grad
Josh Green
Joshua Greenman
Violet Grgich
Rosemarie Grimaldi
Honor Guthrie
Raymond Gutowski
Amir Hadar
Lars Henriksen
Ezra Henson
Juan D. Hernandez
Hugi Hilmisson

Hillary and Scott Simon

Daniel Hirschhorn
Stephen Huber
Mark Izydore
Marta Izydore
Scott Joachim
Robert Johnson
Arnold Kaminkow
Joe Kaminkow
Nick Karis
Karen Karlsrud
Jesse Katz
Amber Kelleher-Andrews
Hicham Khodr
Vlad Khomenko
Kenton King
Alex Klein
Paul Kwiecinski
Eva LaRue
Chantal Leduc

2018: PAUL DIMALANTA; 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022: ROBB RICE; JUDGES AND DINNER: TOM O'NEAL

2021 | Luxury Car of the Year: Rolls-Royce Ghost

SPECS: 563 hp | 155 mph top speed (limited) | 14 mpg

PRICE WHEN NEW: $332,500 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▲ $418,152[2]

WHAT WE SAID THEN: "With the latest iteration of its most commercially successful model, the baronial automaker has given the sedan paradigm not just a shift but a shove."

WHAT WE SAY NOW: The Ghost's excellence necessitated two categories of Car of the Year winner for the first time.

2021 | Sports Car of the Year: Lamborghini Huracán Evo RWD Spyder

SPECS: 602 hp | 201 mph top speed | 15 mpg

PRICE WHEN NEW: $229,428 | **VALUE TODAY:** ▲ $332,357[2]

WHAT WE SAID THEN: "It has a rear-wheel-drive configuration that presents a different specimen altogether, one with the same refined engineering but a lot more leash."

WHAT WE SAY NOW: A complete drive experience and a memorable end to the Raging Bull's five-year COTY reign.

2022 | Bentley Continental GT/GTC Speed

SPECS: 650 hp | 208 mph top speed | 15 mpg

PRICE WHEN NEW: $274,900 (coupe) / $302,400

VALUE TODAY: ▲ $288,125[3] / $328,268[2]

WHAT WE SAID THEN: "The two-door's parkour-worthy agility belied its over 5,000-pound curb weight."

WHAT WE SAY NOW: The third Continental to be awarded the COTY crown, and the beginning of a repeat with this year's winner, and it's not hard to see why: If we could drive only one car forever, it would likely be this one.

After Hours

Josh Leibowitz
Peter Li
Steve Lohr
Patricia Low
Joshua Lowell
Drew MacEwen
Skip MacHarg
Sean Maher
Jeremy Mancheski
Carol Manning
John Marshall
Ryan McKay
Cindy McMackin
Ronald McMackin
Eric Mear
Harry Mear
Cédric Meeschaert
Camilo Miguel
Stephen Miles
Jerry Miller
William Moler
Tom Montgomery
Bruce Mooers
Sophie Morice
David Mosteller
Veronika Mudra
Merle Mullin
Heather Murphy
Sean Murphy
Thomas Murphy
Mark Newman
Ron Newman
Lee Oleinick
Ruben Oliva
Armin Oskouei
Olga Ozerskaya
Leo Palazzo
Bogi Palsson
Ken Parr
Stacey Payne
Jonathan Piland
Betty Polansky
Everett Robert
Jon Robinson
Ella Rose
Garret Rutherford
Ricardo A. Sagrera
Morgan Saliny
Matt Schiefferly
Scott Schultz
Anna Sewart
Judd Shader
Andrew Shantz
Praveen Sharma
Hillary Simon
Scott Simon
Mark Singer
Mickala Sisk
Mike Sisk
Adam Smith
Lindsay Smith
Arvind Sodhani
Sibylle Gabrielle Spühler-Moran
Robert Stark
Michael Steinger
Kevin Stolle
Craig Stull
Karen Stull
Owen Tharrington
Charles Thomas
Najeeb Thomas
Ben Uretsky
Lev Uretsky
Richard Vanderbrook
Mark Vanreuth
Ronald Vogel
Amy Way
Steve Way
Jonathan Weizman
Tim Wentworth
Mary Westbrook
Rick Westbrook
John White
Charles Williams
Michael Williams
Sean Williams
Stuart Winston
Andre Wlodar
Kenneth Woolcott
Burton Young
Linda Young
John Zappettini
Daniel Zepponi

Robb Report Car of the Year judges don't have an easy job. They're tasked with driving 10 cars over the course of a day, most of which are being encountered for the first time and many presenting a bewildering array of features and functions, each with its own methods of operation—imagine a professional studio musician sight-reading a new musical score, playing as the pages turn, all without missing a beat. It's about getting in the groove, and at Car of the Year, those grooves are either a superlative West Coast driving road or a closed course, depending on whether one joins the party in Napa Valley, Calif., or in Boca Raton, Fla., respectively.

This year, we returned to our favorite home away from home, the Meadowood Resort in St. Helena, Calif., whose team welcomed us back after our two-year absence following a major fire that consumed much of the region in 2020. It was a heartwarming homecoming for all of our repeat judges. The roads near Meadowood allow the cars to perform, and at the end of the day, the drivers did likewise, with a wine glass in one hand and a microphone in the other, rendering opinions that were, as one wisecracker observed, "occasionally correct."

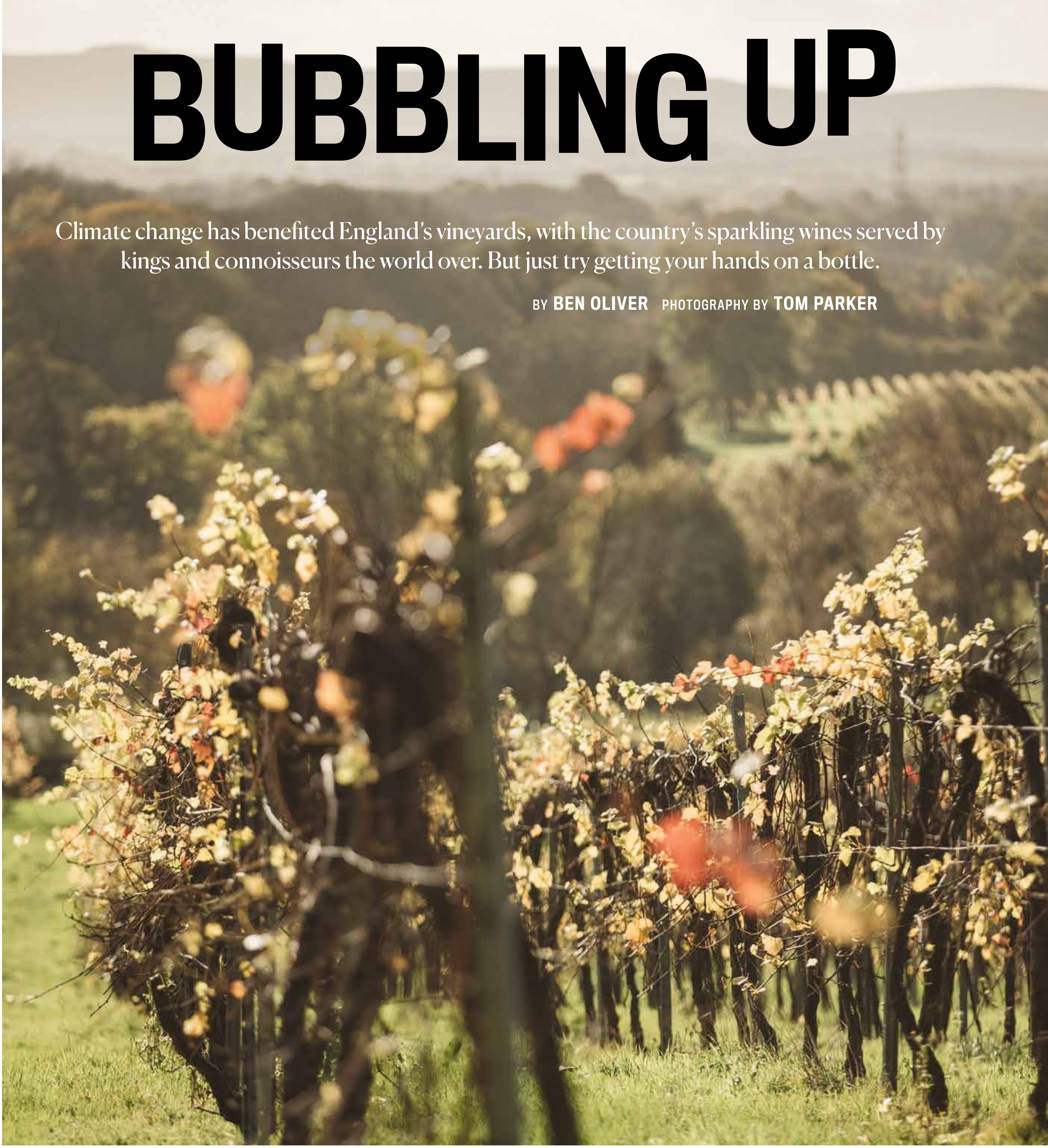
Florida judges had it just as good, but different. The Boca Raton Resort hosted our guests, and drive days began by hopping into a car and onto the highway, headed for the Concours Club in Opa-locka. There, the circuit offered an ideal setup for slalom, straight-line, braking and other maneuvers that allowed drivers to explore the capabilities of every car. Some of the biggest surprises came with entrants more associated with extremes of comfort than of power and agility, such as the Rolls-Royce Phantom, which proved its mettle in this very nontraditional setting. One of the sessions invited members of the Concours Club, some of them accomplished professional racers, to drive the cars on their own course. No matter which coasts our judges were on, much fun was had by all. ●

A judging dinner hosted by the Barn at Far Niente in Napa

BUBBLING UP

Climate change has benefited England's vineyards, with the country's sparkling wines served by kings and connoisseurs the world over. But just try getting your hands on a bottle.

BY **BEN OLIVER** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TOM PARKER**



England's Bolney Wine Estate in Sussex, left, and a member of its winemaking team having a good day.

Standing on an elevated, panoramic terrace of a winery restaurant, I look out over rows of vines stretching straight and even to the foot of the steep chalk ridge that extends as far as I can see to either side along the valley. It is November, and the leaves are mottling yellow and brown and falling away to compost around the rootstocks. Behind me, the hundreds of tons of grapes produced by these vines over the summer have finished their first fermentation in the winery's vast stainless-steel tanks. These base wines will soon be tasted and blended by the winemakers before being aged in the bottle using the traditional *méthode champenoise* to acquire their flavor and fizz. The quality of the fruit produced during this past long, warm summer suggests that the vintage might be one of the best ever. We'll know in three years.

But I'm not in Champagne. On the other side of that long, high ridge lies the English Channel, and I'd need to cross it and travel another 200 miles southeast through France to reach the region most renowned for sparkling wine.

Instead, I'm at the Rathfinny wine estate near Alfriston at the heart of English sparkling-wine country, centered in the southern counties of Sussex, Kent and Hampshire. It is nearing winter in northern Europe, yet it's unusually warm here, and I can wander through Rathfinny's vines comfortably in just a sweater. But perhaps we need to rethink what constitutes "unusual" weather. Making great wine is a complicated and delicate balance of skill, soil and, most importantly, sunshine, and the one-degree Celsius (roughly two degrees Fahrenheit) increase in average global temperatures is having a dramatic effect on winemakers around the world. In just 40 years,

From left: *Bolney winemaker Cara Lee Dely; roasted Jerusalem artichoke and kale salad at the vineyard's Eighteen Acre café.*

the ideal climatic conditions that produced the Champagne that countless revelers have sipped to ring in the New Year and toast celebrations have shifted those same 200 miles northwest—here, to southern England. There are other reasons why the area is now one of the world's fastest growing and most exciting wine regions, but the most significant is climate change.

The impact on the wine industry will be huge. Rathfinny and the other English sparkling-wine makers are winning international awards, attracting deep-pocketed investors and booming in output. Just under 10 million bottles of English wine were sold last year (for context, 322 million bottles of Champagne were sold in 2021), and the industry aims to quadruple annual production within two decades. Around 70 percent of production is sparkling, because it's perfectly suited to the conditions and is more profitable. But the country's still wines are improving quickly, too, with the warmer temperatures resulting in more reliable, fuller-bodied reds. Nearly 900 vineyards and close to 200 wineries are now operating in England, with over 10,000 acres of land under vine, an increase of 70 percent over just five years.

Millions more vines are being planted, some of them by the great Champagne houses themselves. Taittinger and Pommery have established vineyards in England, and other venerable names are actively looking for land or trying to buy existing wineries. Overseas investments aren't new concepts for them, and their involvement is a result of both their newfound respect for English winemaking and their desire to maintain their market share in the UK, Champagne's largest export market, as more English consumers support the home team.

While English grapes are enjoying just the right degree of warmth, the Champagne region's fruit is becoming uncomfortably hot. Winemakers there are having to work harder to maintain quality and character amid ever more scorching summers and earlier harvests. Few are bold enough to predict the demise of Champagne as we know it. But should climate change permanently alter the nature of the region's signature product, or even prevent sparkling wine from being produced there entirely, a cooler English outpost will look like a prescient investment.

The buzz around English sparkling wine might be new, but winemaking here is not. Evidence suggests that the Romans planted vines north of London, and the Domesday Book of 1086 records 42 vineyards. In 1662, the English physician and scientist Christopher Merret presented a paper to the Royal Society noting how the English were adding sugar to imported still wine in the bottle to induce a secondary fermentation—and thus, fizz. This is the same *méthode champenoise* (or traditional method, as it's known when employed outside the Champagne region) that the French monk Dom Pierre Pérignon popularized in Champagne 35 years later.

The English might have gotten to bubbly first, but for centuries their climate meant they couldn't do much about it. Europe's Little Ice Age from the mid-1300s to the mid-1800s made it too cold to produce wine at scale. Commercial viticulture is a relatively recent phenomenon in England, with more than half of the country's current vines being planted in the 2010s. But there are already some second-generation winemakers for whom English wine has been their entire life's work and who have witnessed the explosion in the quantity and quality of English wines, as well as the impact of climate change.

The Bolney Wine Estate, located a few miles north of the coast, in the heart of Sussex, was among the first commercial vineyards, established half a century ago by Janet and Rodney Pratt. Their daughter, Sam Linter, is now the managing director. "I remember being very tiny and helping at harvest," she says. "There wasn't much money in those days, so we'd get friends and family to help. Some of them weren't the youngest, shall we say, and couldn't bend down to pick the lowest bunches, so that was my job. We only had two acres at the start, and we'd push the grapes between the vines in an old pram Mum found."

"They were pioneers," Linter says of her parents. "Dad had worked on a vineyard in Germany and was convinced we could do the same here. Everyone told them they were bonkers, but they had the vision. I don't think they thought it would take 50 years to get there, though."

Just eight miles away, at Ridgeview, near the charming village of Ditchling, Simon Roberts is also a second-generation winemaker, his parents having planted their first vines in 1995 on what was then a largely derelict farm. Simon stayed here for a summer to help with the planting before starting a planned undergraduate degree in yacht design. But he stuck with wine and now runs the business as winemaker alongside his sister, Tamara, the CEO.

> *"Climate change is devastating ecosystems. We're one of the very few winners in a world full of losers."*

"When we first started farming this land, winter was November through to March," he says. "But winter is now just January and maybe a bit into February, and then spring starts. We have a much longer growing season than Champagne now, and what's really key is not the change in peak temperatures but the mean temperature over the whole year.

"Even in the last five years, it's been consistently drier and warmer in the summer," he continues. "Those changes are dramatic, but they're accelerating so much quicker in mainland Europe than they are here because of the maritime effect of being on an island."

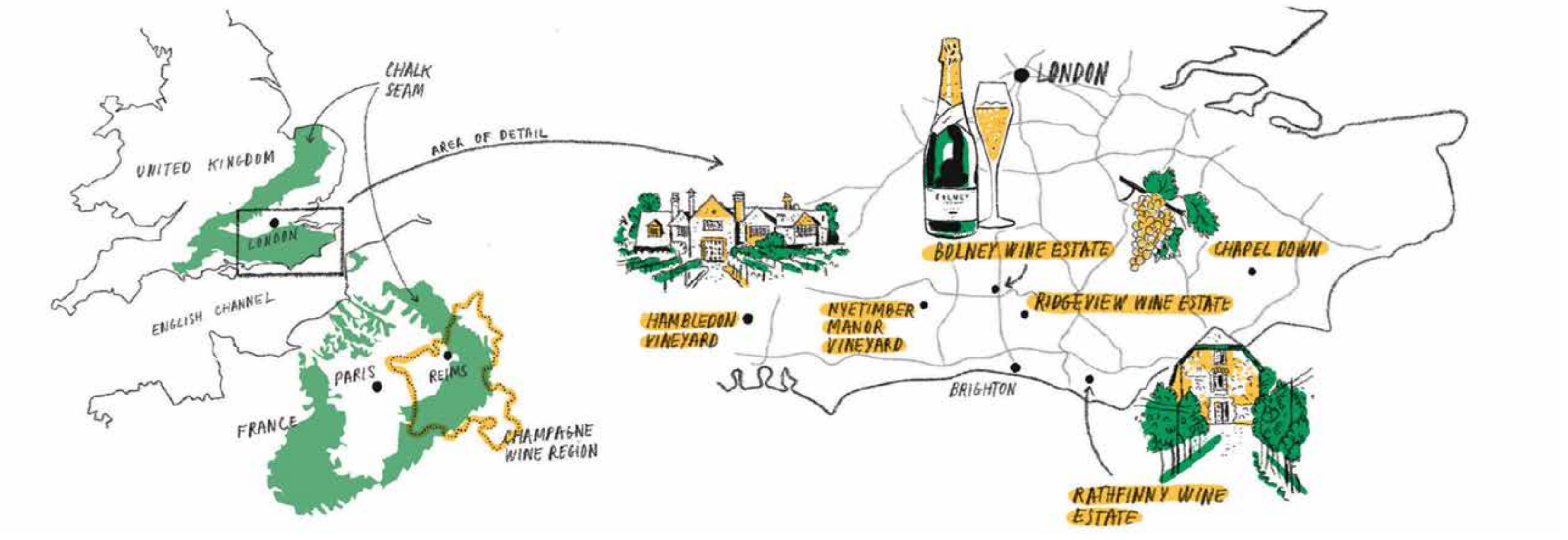


ILLUSTRATION BY PETER OUMANSKI

None of these winemakers take any pleasure in global warming. They're simply doing what farmers have always done: growing the right crop for their conditions. "Climate change is devastating ecosystems, it's devastating economies, it's devastating communities," says Greg Dunn, an Australian academic who leads the wine department at Plumpton College, located close to both Bolney and Ridgeview. "We're one of the very few winners in a world full of losers."

Dunn's lecture halls and laboratories mix kids in their late teens with older students who've already made fortunes elsewhere, which they're now plowing into local vineyards. Once trained, they're all mingling with exciting young foreign talent, such as Bolney's Cara Lee Dely, a South African, drawn by the improving conditions and the chance to run a winery far earlier in their careers than they could in more established wine regions. Together they're creating a cadre of brilliant British-based winemakers, and that expertise is having as much impact on the quality of English wine as the changing climate is.

> *"We want adventurous consumers, the people who love to discover new wines and then bring their discoveries to their friends."*

Tamara and Simon Roberts at Ridgeview, founded by their parents in the '90s

"The warmer conditions mean there's more complexity in the wines now," says Roberts. "But the wines have changed because we've gotten better as winemakers, too. We are such a young industry, and it's only in the [past] five years that I feel that I'm doing a pretty good job."

Others might contend that Ridgeview has been good for much longer. In the so-called Judgment of Paris, in 1976, the judges—nine French wine experts—rated Californian wines higher than their Bordeaux and Burgundian rivals in a blind tasting, finally proving that new-world wines could at least match those of the old. The closest that English sparkling wine has come to its own Judgment of Paris moment was in 2010, when Ridgeview's 2006 Blanc de Blancs won the Decanter International Trophy for Sparkling Wine—the first time an English wine had won a major international award against Champagnes and not just other non-Champagne sparkling wines.

Whether as a result of climate change or the skill of the winemakers, British examples have only improved since then, and other top English sparkling-wine houses, including Nyetimber, Chapel Down, Hambledon and Rathfinny, have joined Ridgeview and Bolney in acquiring international reputations. English sparkling wine still has the lightness, crispness and acidity typical of cool-climate wines—what Simon Thorpe, the British master of wine who heads the industry body Wines of Great Britain, describes as a "refined, precise tension." But the greater complexity that Roberts describes comes largely from the longer, warmer summers, which allow more "hang time" for the fruit on the vine. Those extra days in more intense heat impart greater phenolic ripeness in the grape—essentially, the development of flavor as well as sugar, which tends to happen earlier. More sunshine also means more sugar, but cooler nights help English wines maintain their acidity levels and thus their distinctive freshness. That's balanced by more fruit flavor now, yielding increasingly rounded, sophisticated wines, more comparable to Champagne and more appealing to a worldwide audience.

The wineries are also more appealing to the big global players who want a presence here. From the humblest of beginnings, Bolney is now building a winery capable of producing 750,000 bottles a year, and last year Linter sold a controlling stake in the enterprise to Henkell Freixenet, the wine and spirits giant. From an initial plan to make 20,000 bottles each year, Ridgeview now has a new cellar capable of aging a million bottles at a time—and has declined buyout offers from the big Champagne houses, which are still very much in the market for English acquisitions.

If Bolney and Ridgeview typify the bootstrapping pioneers of English wine, then Sarah and Mark Driver exemplify another breed: the passionate investors. Stellar careers—Sarah as a lawyer, Mark co-managing the Horseman Capital hedge fund—enabled them to buy the 600-acre Rathfinny estate in a beautiful fold of Sussex's South Downs hills. Before they'd planted the first of their 385,000 vines in 2012, Mark went back to school at Plumpton College to study viniculture, and when it was mentioned in class that the Rathfinny estate, formerly an arable farm, had been sold and would become a vineyard, he raised his hand and admitted that he'd bought it.

Mark and Sarah revel in the details: the *muselets*, or wire cages that sit over the corks of their wines, are color-coded—pink for the rosé, black for the Blanc de Noirs—and if you undo them with your right hand, the Rathfinny crest set into the cork will be correctly oriented. That care is reflected in the wines they produce: Crisp, elegant and an easy equal to a Champagne, they're sought out by top London hotels, including the Dorchester and the Berkeley.

The investment required to create a top-notch sparkling-wine enterprise from scratch is immense—not only in the land but in the planting, the buildings, the vast presses and tanks trucked over from Champagne, the hundreds of staff at harvest and the long wait for a return. The Drivers expect to break even for the first time this year, and I suggest to Mark that their personal investment in Rathfinny might not have met his professional criteria as a hedge-fund manager.

"It's a generational investment," he replies. "The old adage that you plant a vineyard for the next generation is true, because it takes you eight years from planting your first vine to selling your first bottle of wine. We wrote a 30-year business plan, and we're about to write a hundred-year plan for the entire estate."

"But there was some logic to it," he adds. "We knew there would be strong domestic demand. And we also did an analysis of the climate. We have weather records here going back 120 years which show that average annual temperatures flatlined for a century until the 1980s and then started gradually increasing. Our average annual temperature is now one degree higher, and that, sadly, is what we're benefiting from."

If you're thinking that now might be a good time to invest in English wine, you'd be right. There's still plenty of desirable, south-facing, well-drained land not yet under vine. Although much of southern England shares the same chalk terroir as Champagne, Greg Dunn and other experts insist that it's not required to make superlative sparkling wine, and many of the great English vineyards sit on different geologies. You'll pay around $24,500 per acre, plus another $21,000 or so to put the vines in, according to Nick Watson, a land agent at Strutt & Parker who brokers such deals. That's a fraction of what you'd pay for land in Champagne, with considerable upside should the current boom maintain momentum. But the land

A GRAND TOUR

A few notable picks from three of our favorite wineries

Given that the British rather selfishly consume 95 percent of their acclaimed sparkling wines themselves, the surest way to sample the product is to visit the vineyards and buy direct. Although there are 195 wineries across England—and two in Wales—the best-known (and best-prepared to welcome wine tourists) are found mostly in the warmer southerly counties of Hampshire, Kent and East and West Sussex. A road trip to see them is hardly a chore, as many are in the achingly lovely South Downs National Park or Kent's High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. You may want to mix some of the big names in English wine, among them Nyetimber and Chapel Down, with smaller wineries such as Sussex's Artelium, which doubles as an art gallery.

Last year, 38 percent of English wine was sold at the cellar door, and these high-margin sales, along with the additional revenue from tours, tastings and fine dining—plus the brand loyalty that often results from a visit—are part of the vineyards' strategy. Napa Valley, in particular, has been the role model. "For a long time, the best wines from Napa Valley never made it to the UK because they were all consumed locally," notes Simon Thorpe, a master of wine and CEO of Wines of Great Britain, the industry body for English winemakers.

"Ninety-eight percent of passengers arriving at London Gatwick airport turn north and head into the city," says Sarah Driver, cofounder of the Rathfinny wine estate. "We're on a mission to make them head south." So, in addition to the usual tours and tastings, Rathfinny offers dining of exceptional quality and value in a restaurant with panoramic views of the vineyard, as well as accommodations in the 10-room Flint Barns, a beautifully restored ancient structure deep in the heart of the estate, once used to house the vineyard's "pickers and pruners." If you stay here, ensconced within its thick, centuries-old walls, miles from the nearest village or even public road, the loudest sound you're likely to hear is that of the grapes growing around you. It's eerie but magical.

If you're determined to sleep amidst the vines, the Oxney and Oastbrook wine estates farther east both feature accommodations and easy access to big-name Kentish vineyards, including Gusbourne and Chapel Down, which don't yet have guest rooms of their own.

West of Rathfinny, in the central Sussex region, Ridgeview and Bolney also offer new restaurants of a standard you're always slightly surprised to discover at the end of the rustic tracks that lead you to the winery, along with the chance to try some of their lesser-known still wines by the glass. Bolney's Bacchus, the creation of its young South African winemaker, Cara Lee Dely, was a particular revelation: crisp, complex, utterly distinctive but, sadly, made only in small quantities. (Had I not visited, I likely never would have encountered it.)

Because neither has guest quarters, book the nearby Ockenden Manor, a pleasing juxtaposition of Elizabethan manor-house hotel and modernist spa. In the west of the region, both the Tinwood and Ashling Park vineyards offer simple but stylish lodges. For something more luxurious and dramatic, stay within the 60-foot-high, 900-year-old walls of Amberley Castle, as Henry VIII once did, and strike out for the renowned winery at Nyetimber.

As if to prove the appeal of a tour of English wine country, as I was leaving Rathfinny a long, shiny black Mercedes "chauffeur jet" luxury bus pulled up and disgorged the president of one of the world's largest companies—with a market capitalization deep into the hundreds of billions of dollars—and his retinue for lunch. Your arrival may be more subtle, but the welcome and the wine will be the same.

An aerial view of Rathfinny, with Flint Barns, offering a namesake restaurant and overnight accommodations, in the foreground. ***Opposite, from top:*** *Rathfinny founders Sarah and Mark Driver; a starter of charred sea trout is served with focaccia baked with grapes from the vineyard at its Michelin-recommended restaurant, Tasting Room.*

seldom comes onto the open market: You'll have to approach the landowners through an agent such as Watson and negotiate an off-market sale. And you might find yourself bidding against one of the big Champagne houses.

Taittinger, founded in 1734, has now planted its own vineyard, Domaine Evremond, in Kent. The French brand insists that it's simply a passion project, driven purely by the founding family's respect for English wine and not by fears of falling Champagne sales in the UK or an existential risk to Champagne itself.

"We see the effect of global warming, but we're not afraid," says Christelle Rinville, Taittinger's vineyard director. "Thirty years ago, harvest started at the end of September. Now it's the beginning of September. But one of the strengths of Champagne is its ability to react. Even after the phylloxera epidemic in the 19th century, we were able to make great Champagne again. And maybe we're in the same position again, at a crossroads, and that the future will be more difficult. So we have to think about our practices, our rootstocks and even our grape varieties and perhaps include those which can support hotter temperatures and less rain. But we'll never lose sight of the need to maintain the character of Champagne."

"Champagne will always be Champagne," she insists. "It's internationally recognized, and it's only a very small proportion of all the sparkling wine produced globally. English sparkling wine is very interesting, and very good, but it's no different than the competition we face from other regions in the world."

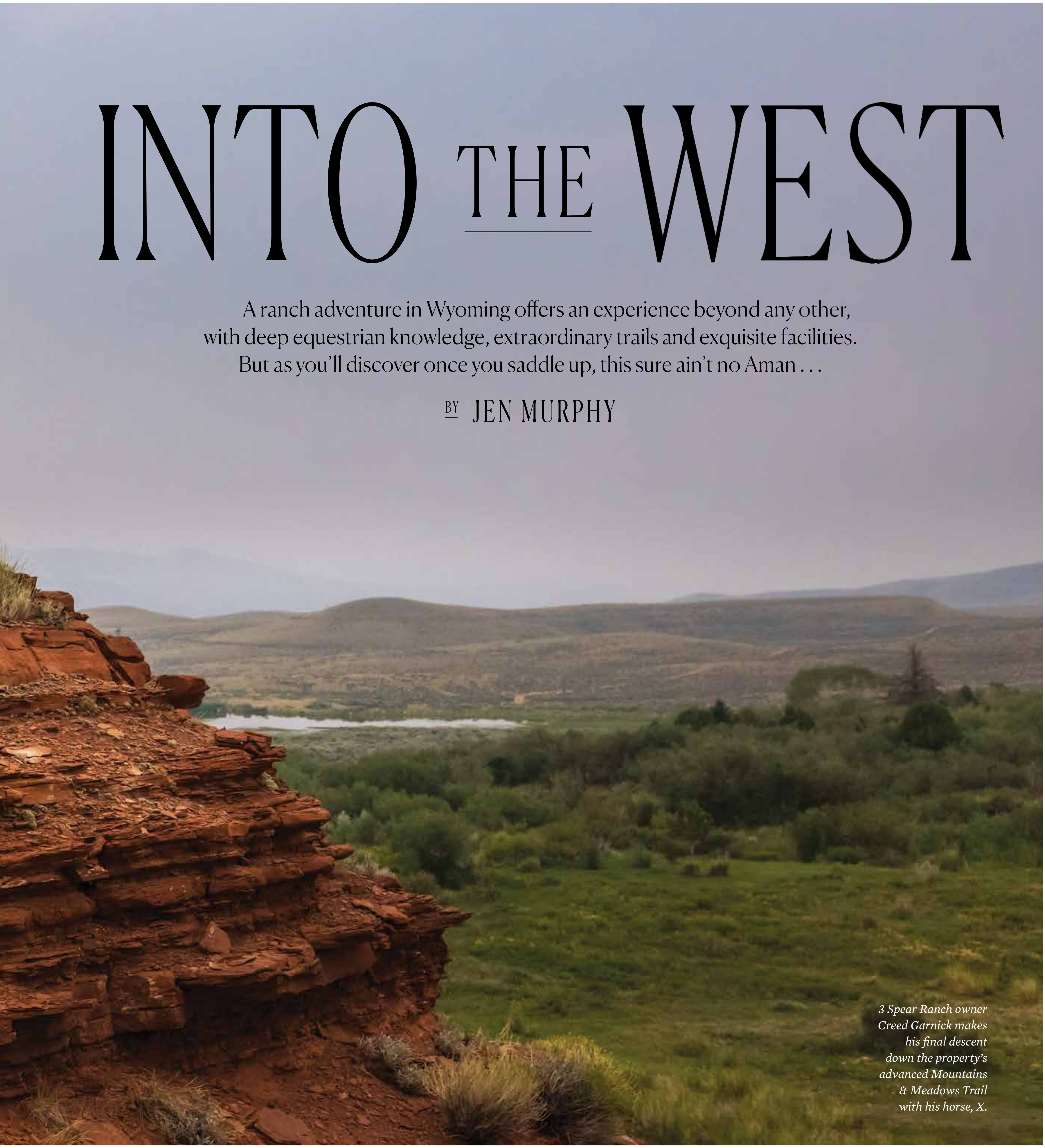
The 15 million bottles likely to be produced by the entire English wine industry this year are just a tiny fraction of the nearly 2 billion bottles the country consumes annually. The UK is the world's second-largest importer of wine, after the US, and the biggest market for Champagne. The Brits have good taste, deep pockets and a natural affinity for home-grown products, so English sparkling wine can be scarce even in the UK as high-end restaurants and hotels (and the Royal Household) hoover up the best bottles. Central London alone could easily consume England's entire wine production, and only around 5 percent makes it out of the country.

"We want scarcity," says Mark Driver. "We want adventurous consumers, the people who love to discover new wines and then bring their discoveries to their friends." If that's you; if you're bold enough to serve something other than Champagne to your guests and challenge them to tell the difference, you can find English sparkling wine in most major markets, but you'll have to seek it out. King Charles III served Ridgeview at his first state banquet, held in honor of the president of South Africa. So you'll be in good company when you celebrate with a bottle of Ridgeview or Rathfinny—even as you curse the changing climate that creates it. ●

INTO THE WEST

A ranch adventure in Wyoming offers an experience beyond any other, with deep equestrian knowledge, extraordinary trails and exquisite facilities. But as you'll discover once you saddle up, this sure ain't no Aman . . .

BY JEN MURPHY



3 Spear Ranch owner Creed Garnick makes his final descent down the property's advanced Mountains & Meadows Trail with his horse, X.

The night's first stars have started to glow ever so faintly in the big cloudless Western sky above. I twist my neck to take them in from the saddle of my horse. Just ahead of me, Creed Garnick removes his dusty cowboy hat and reclines, resting his head on his horse's back and making the saddle seem like the most comfortable lounge chair. The lifelong horseman and owner of 3 Spear Ranch, a 1,200-acre property in Dubois, Wyo., doesn't need to watch where he's going. He and his chestnut mare, X, ride as one.

In the distance, the boom of an announcer's voice and an eruption of whoops and cheers break the silence and interrupt Garnick's stargazing reverie. He sits up, replaces his hat and gives X a kick as he turns to me and shouts, "Gotta pick up the pace! Rodeo's started!" And suddenly we're loping toward the arena lights.

I've stayed at dude ranches that shuttle guests to the town rodeo and some that host their own private event where staff show off their calf-roping and barrel-racing skills. Those experiences have always made me feel like a city-slicker spectator. But arriving at the Dubois Friday-night rodeo on horseback alongside Garnick, a former rodeo star who hails from one of the American West's oldest ranching families, I hold myself less like an outsider and almost like a local. The bronc- and bull-riding events provide plenty of thrills, but the adrenaline rush of the evening is the 90-minute trip home beneath a sky so clear that the Milky Way is in full view. The journey, it turns out, is the main event, the experience guests will keep forever lodged in their memory.

There are low-frills dude ranches run by families with deep knowledge of horses and the land alike, and there are luxury ranches with speakeasy-style cocktail bars, bowling alleys and mechanical bulls—the latter category often initiated by gentleman cowboys who know more about finance and French wines than saddling a horse and rearing steer. Garnick's 3 Spear is the rare lodge that straddles both worlds.

With just eight guest cabins—most dating back to the 1800s, all of which have been or will be refurbished by Garnick and his childhood friend and general manager, Chandler Minton—the ranch offers a highly individualized experience. Securing a stay isn't as simple as reserving a cabin online; Minton has personally vetted every booking with a follow-up phone call since the ranch welcomed its first guests in the summer of 2021. "We're not for everyone," he explains. "People see the word 'luxury' and assume they'll get the Aman."

At 3 Spear, luxury isn't defined by thread counts or designer toiletries. It's the opportunity to step out of your comfort zone for a few days and be immersed in a lifestyle you've always fantasized about, while also having a hospitality team intuit your every desire, from a post-ride massage to a pre-dinner family steer-roping tutorial. "Before each arrival, we get to know the guests and then plan an extraordinary stay full of surprises," Minton says.

Minton and Garnick, both 35, know a thing or two about capturing the drama of the American West—and impressing an audience. Minton honed his hospitality skills at some of the country's top hotels, including Amangani in Jackson Hole, Wyo., and the Lodge at Blue Sky, an Auberge Resorts Collection property in Park City, Utah. Garnick, meanwhile, spent years performing on New York City stages. Reunited at 3 Spear, they're a rare duo delivering a hard-to-come-by combination: an authentic ranch vacation with five-star attention to detail.

A few days earlier, Garnick picks me up at the Jackson Hole airport. His sunflower-yellow Toyota FJ40 Land Cruiser stands out in a sea of black SUVs. On the 90-minute drive to the ranch, he recounts his eccentric upbringing. One of eight kids,

Russian Doll *star Charlie Barnett, who held his wedding to set designer Drew Bender at the ranch last summer, shares a lakeside cookout with Creed and Sascha Garnick and their son, Huckleberry.*

he was raised in the sleepy town of Dubois (pronounced DOO-boyz) by a family passionate about both ranching and theater. He inherited the 1970s-era Clint Eastwood good looks of his paternal grandfather, Bill Garnick, one of the original Marlboro Man actors, and the gumption of his parents, Vicki and Cameron Garnick, who met at Sundance Mountain Resort in 1976, when both were performing in a regional production of *West Side Story*, with Cameron playing Riff and Vicki cast as Riff's girlfriend, Velma. They went on to run some of Dubois's most popular guest ranches as well as the historic Jackson Hole Playhouse—Vicki bootlegged booze to pay for the lease in 1980 and now owns and still oversees the theater.

As a kid, Garnick traveled across Central Asia performing alongside his father in Wild West shows. When a bull-riding injury ended his competitive-rodeo aspirations, he turned his full attention to acting, training at the prestigious Juilliard School in New York City and eventually taking over a lead role in Christopher Durang's Tony Award–winning comedy *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* on Broadway in 2013. His résumé reads like a modern-day Will Rogers's: both horseman and showman. He even traveled to Kyrgyzstan to captain the first US team in *kok-boru,* a rougher version of Rogers's beloved polo that uses a goat carcass as a ball, and directed a documentary about the experience, *Nomad Cowboys,* now in post-production.

After we drive through Dubois's blink-and-you'll-miss-it downtown, we turn up a pockmarked dirt road and see steam rising from the ranch's natural warm springs beyond. Garnick and his wife, Sascha, a native of Jackson Hole who owned a jewelry business and dabbled in film and TV gigs in Los Angeles, purchased the land in 2018 from the longtime owners, the Albright family, who established it as a ranch and summer retreat in the early 1900s. Ivan Albright, the last Albright to live here, was also an artist. One of the cabins served as his studio, and his paintings, many inspired by Dubois's wide-open vistas, are in prestigious collections, including the Museum of Modern Art's.

The land is nestled at the mouth of a canyon with sweeping views of the Wind River Valley and Absaroka Mountain Range. A dozen or so of the ranch's 30 horses roam the sage-brush-carpeted hills in the distance. Garnick stops at an old chink-style log barn. "This is the heart of the ranch," he says proudly as he opens my door and motions me over to a fence. "Meet the family." With a theatrical sweep of his arm, he gestures toward a barnyard menagerie: long-bearded billy goats, woolly sheep, Shetland ponies, hairy pigs, dogs of all sizes, more horses. He scratches noses and rubs bellies as he introduces each by name.

At the main lodge, Sascha is waiting with the youngest members of the family, the couple's 1-year-old son, Huckleberry, and newborn daughter, Fable. The ranch is, first and foremost, the Garnicks' home. It's where they will continue to cultivate their love of the arts, teach their children to ride horses and try to live, as Garnick likes to say, "a harmonious existence with the land." The last part could sound a bit righteous, but in today's tech-driven society, many of us have forgotten how to be self-sufficient, let alone exist in nature. Steadfastly self-reliant, Garnick oils and waxes his clothes to protect them from the elements and built the lodge's dining room furniture by hand from local wood. The ethos at 3 Spear is a reminder that there's beauty in a more intentional, mindful way of life and wisdom within the land.

The operation's intimate size allows Garnick and Minton to act as personal hosts for every guest. Blue-eyed and ruddy cheeked, Minton has an unwaveringly sunny disposition. He calls everyone "friend," and it feels like he actually means it. Garnick, however, was his first true friend, he tells me the day I arrive. The boys met when they were 6 years old and went on to ride rodeo together, play *kok-boru* and share other adventures on horseback. Minton even worked as a wrangler at one of the Garnick family ranches.

The lodge offers epic hikes and fly-fishing on the Wind River as well as the property's stream and two lakes, all full of native rainbow trout. But horseback riding is at the heart of most stays, and unlike at other area ranches, there are no nose-to-tail trail rides here. Each excursion is tailored to a guest's ability, which Garnick and Minton can expertly discern upon your first interaction with a horse. And if you're a *real* rider, you're in for a treat.

The men lead most outings and relish the chance to take experienced equestrians on their favorite adventures through daunting terrain so steep your horse might slide down on its rear end or drop off a three-foot cliff. Windy Mountain, the picturesque 10,262-foot peak that looms behind the ranch, can be summited via a five-hour expedition across grasslands, rolling hills and a

THE ETHOS AT 3 SPEAR IS A REMINDER THAT THERE'S BEAUTY IN A MORE

INTENTIONAL, MINDFUL WAY OF LIFE AND WISDOM WITHIN THE LAND.

3 Spear's horsemen can typically tell an experienced rider from a beginner before they're even in the saddle.

precipitous former logging road. The pair can also arrange multi-night pack trips or erect a camp next to an old miner's cabin for a backcountry-light experience catered by the house chef.

I consider myself an intermediate rider at best—comfortable on a horse but no cowgirl. On my second day, Garnick pairs me with Z Man, a sure-footed caramel-hued mare. Most of my week is spent in the saddle exploring. After Garnick purchased the property, he took near-daily scouting missions, discovering what he calls "natural treasures," including caves and swimming holes. These aren't places you'll find in guidebooks, and guests are asked not to geotag photos of the spots on social media in order to ensure these special places stay that way.

We're on a ride a few days later, deep in the 2.4-million–acre Shoshone National Forest that borders 3 Spear, when I finally ask Garnick if he ever considered auditioning for a role on *Yellowstone* or *1883,* the hit series that have reignited urbanites' fascination with cowboy culture. He stiffens slightly, hinting that this might be an annoyingly common question from guests. Born and raised on a ranch, he takes a swipe at the stars' horsemanship, then admits he auditioned for season one of *Yellowstone* but was not cast, though his younger brother Golden just landed a role in the new season. "Things work out as they are meant to be," Garnick says—and sounds like he means it—as we trot through dense stands of lodgepole pine. Though he sure looks the part of a cowboy and certainly rides like one, he considers himself a rancher now, and 3 Spear seems destined to be his legacy.

The property is an hour's drive from Grand Teton National Park and 90 minutes from Yellowstone. The latter's unique geological features—Old Faithful and the bubbling Fountain Paint Pot Trail—are worth the day trip, but if you want wildlife viewing, there's plenty to be had around the ranch. During my weeklong stay, I see antelope and elk, bighorn sheep, foxes and eagles, all from horseback. Driving, we encounter a traffic-jam-inducing herd of bison and, a few miles later, a mama grizzly and her cubs. This will be 3 Spear's first winter season, and Garnick says the snow makes it even easier to spot animals, including wolves, loping across the property.

Sky and land seem to stretch to eternity here. Most days we ride at an ambling pace that allows me to take in the endless landscape of vermillion-streaked badlands and the jagged, snow-capped peaks of the Absaroka Range. Lunch is always served in the wild, a picnic feast of Brie and prosciutto sandwiches, homemade hummus and crudités. Chef Richard Barnes is responsible for the lodge's sensational food. He and his wife, Lilah Ellis, who handles the front of the house, formerly ran the Lone Buffalo Steakhouse, the closest thing Dubois had to a special-occasion restaurant before 3 Spear opened. Their ranch menu showcases seasonal dishes such as acorn squash stuffed with elk and wild rice, vegan grain bowls and a decadent, 30-day-dry-aged Piedmontese New York Strip. Ellis expertly suggests pairings from a wine list focused on Italian Brunellos and French Premier Crus. Knowing the couple's loyal following, 3 Spear has opened the restaurant to the public, and throughout the summer Garnick invites locals up for live music on the lawn.

Guests are also encouraged to explore Dubois. Downtown is a 10-minute drive from the ranch, and Minton offers to play host. A glowing neon sign on a storefront reads, THIS AIN'T NO JACKSON HOLE, and I can't help but chuckle—you certainly won't see the likes of Prince Harry or Gigi Hadid moseying around this town of barely 900 residents. So far, it has evaded gentrification and held tight to its Old West roots. The Rustic Pine Tavern, a landmark watering hole with sticky wood floors and walls decorated in taxidermy, still holds a Tuesday-night

square dance, while Welty's General Store has been hawking homesteading essentials and Western wear since the late 1800s. A dinosaur-sized steer skull frames the entrance to the local laundromat, and a gas station on the outskirts of town also claims to be home to the world's largest jackalope exhibit.

But change is creeping in, with newer businesses appealing to big-city tastes, including a craft gelato shop and a hip coffee house that serves cold brew and oat-milk lattes. In the past few years, billionaire Dan Starks, a former health-care exec, and his wife, Cynthia, who became Dubois residents in 2016, have invested heavily in the community. The couple recently opened a bells-and-whistles bowling alley and founded the National Museum of Military Vehicles, plowing $100 million into the facility just outside town, which features everything from tanks and jeeps to aircraft and naval vessels. It also houses rare artifacts, including the musket that fired the first shot of the Battle of Bunker Hill in the Revolutionary War. Some old-timers in town worry Dubois could indeed go the way of Jackson Hole, out-pricing locals, but most, including Minton, see the new investment as incentive for the younger generation to stick around.

Hints of the area's own intriguing past are hidden throughout the wilderness. After we split a slice of homemade blueberry-rhubarb pie from the mom-and-pop Cowboy Cafe, Minton drives us to a trailhead for a hike. The trail winds high above Torrey and Rim Lakes, past ancient petroglyphs believed to have been created thousands of years ago by the Tukudika, or Mountain Sheepeaters, a band of the Shoshone Indians who once called this land home. The next day, we off-road to a lookout where he points out a distinctive curved peak—the Ramshorn. The emblem of Dubois sits at the top of the Dunoir River Valley, where the Disney family once owned a ranch.

We drive a bit farther and Minton parks the truck, then leads me down a steep, rocky path to what must have been Disney's inspiration for its famous log-flume ride, Splash Mountain. Narrow wooden channels, many still intact, hug the rocky cliffs across from us. In the early 20th century, Minton explains, Scandinavian immigrants known as tie-hack men set up camp in these forests, felling pines to sell for railroad ties. When the spring runoff came along, the logs were transported to the railroad in Riverton via the Wind River by an intricate wooden aqueduct network. To prevent logjams, daring tie-hack men would ride the logs themselves.

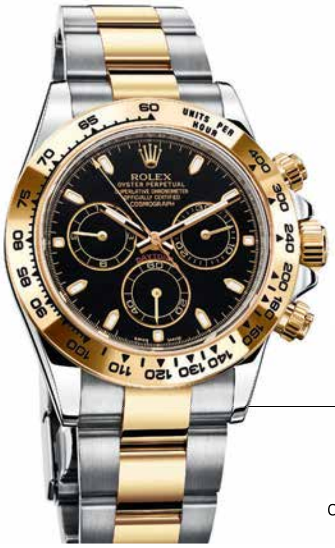
Every hike and ride feels thoughtfully plotted to deliver a complementary history lesson. "We aim to surprise, entertain and educate," Garnick tells me later that evening over a meal of shareable appetizers—roasted beets and burrata, crispy duck wings and a grazing board of bison and venison salumi, elk sausage and cheeses. Minton and Sascha have joined us, and since it's my final night, we take rounds of Moscow mules down to the Pool Palace, a saloon-style building with an original 1892 New Brunswick pool table as focal point.

By midnight, we've made our way to the dock next door, where we dangle our feet in the 80-degree spring pool. A masterful storyteller, Garnick shares an outlandish tale of taking his pet pig on a harrowing hike so it could get some exercise and having to carry the squealing animal back down the mountain, then another about nursing an injured hawk to health (he wears one of its feathers in his hat). After one more round of libations, he's describing his vision to create a riff on *Sleep No More,* the groundbreaking site-specific retelling of Shakespeare's *Macbeth,* at the ranch. "We'll use a work from Anton Chekhov, and maybe guests will ride from scene to scene," he muses, wild-eyed. This is the role Garnick was born to play. He's going off script from the traditional ranch stay and ushering in a fresh, exciting experience that captures the modern-day American West, in all its raw, real glory. ●

Above: *Sunrise Safaris Tours takes guests to view wildlife, historical sites and geothermal oddities.* ***Opposite, from top:*** *Shoshone Cabin, one of the property's oldest structures; the Rustic Pine Tavern's ride-thru window, in Dubois; a welcome vintage clawfoot soaking tub in Tie Hack Cabin.*

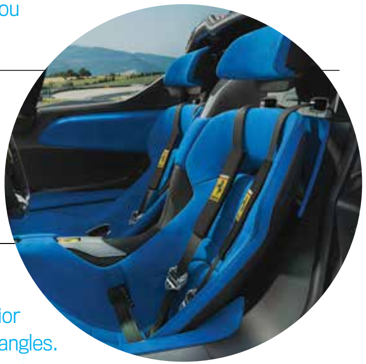
THE DUEL

The hard sands of Daytona Beach have been integral to car racing since the opening of the Daytona Beach and Road Course in 1902. It's where, in 1927, Sir Henry Segrave became the first person to travel over 200 mph, where NASCAR was formed in 1948 and where the prestigious Daytona 500 race started in 1959. With that kind of history, it's no surprise that the motorhead mecca has inspired the names of two products of exceptional design: the highly coveted Rolex Cosmograph Daytona and the 2023 Ferrari Daytona SP3, the third entry in the carmaker's limited-edition Icona series. Which one is worth bringing down the checkered flag upon? Let's help you decide. **Adam Morganstern**



Rolex Cosmograph Daytona vs. 2023 Ferrari Daytona SP3

	Rolex Cosmograph Daytona	2023 Ferrari Daytona SP3
WHAT'S IN A NAME?	Released by Rolex in 1963 to commemorate its role as official timekeeper of the Daytona International Speedway.	Named in honor of Ferrari capturing first, second and third places at the 1967 24 Hours of Daytona—revenge on Ford for shutting out Ferrari at Le Mans the year before. Take that, Detroit.
WHAT IT DOES BEST	Measures elapsed time and helps calculate average speed around the track. Also tells people you have strong taste in watches.	Rockets you to 100 mph in 5.4 seconds—though, since half the fun is being seen in it, you may want to slow down.
STARTING LINE COSTS	$15,750 For the stainless-steel base model, if you can get one, which you can't. On the secondary market? Try double that price, at least.	$2,300,000 Plain base model? *No capito.*
AFTERMARKET OPTIONS	Rolex offers costlier white-gold and platinum editions, some of which feature tastefully set gems, though third-party customizations—everything from encrusting the watch in diamonds to having your name etched and illuminated with LEDs, à la Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the late president of the United Arab Emirates—can zoom the price into the millions.	A choice of body color, leather or suede interior and three options for seat size and seatback angles. (Yes, the chair is fixed to the chassis.) Third-party customizations are possible but not recommended—unless you want to make Ferrari very, very angry.
UNDER THE HOOD	The Caliber 4130 was developed in 2000 and features a self-winding mechanical movement and a vertical clutch, instead of the more typical lateral version, to allow for an instantaneous start when engaging the chronograph's timer.	The most powerful internal-combustion engine ever built by Ferrari: a 6.5-liter V-12 motor capable of 829 hp and a redline that tops out at 9,500 rpm.
CAN IT GO UNDERWATER?	Safe to a depth of up to 100 meters.	No, Mr. Bond. That's your *other* car.
IF I HAVE ONE, DO I NEED THE OTHER?	Technically you don't *need* a Ferrari to get from A to B, but if you're the type to drop the equivalent of a Mazda Miata on a little wrist-mounted machine that tells time less accurately than your phone does, you're probably more of a *want* guy, no?	The Ferrari dashboard also tells time.
ODDS OF CROSSING THE FINISH LINE	Wait time of one to three years *if* you have an impeccable relationship with the brand or an authorized retailer—meaning you've already spent a mint on other Rolex models.	If you're reading this and haven't already secured one . . . zero. Only 599 will be made, and they're all spoken for.



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